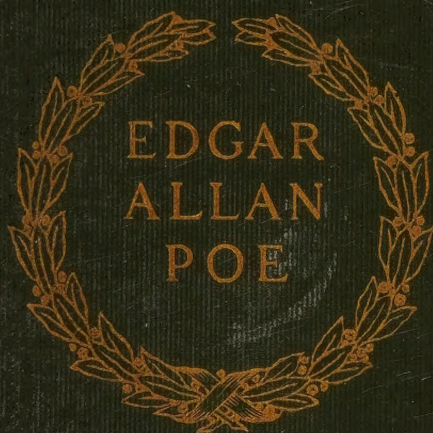




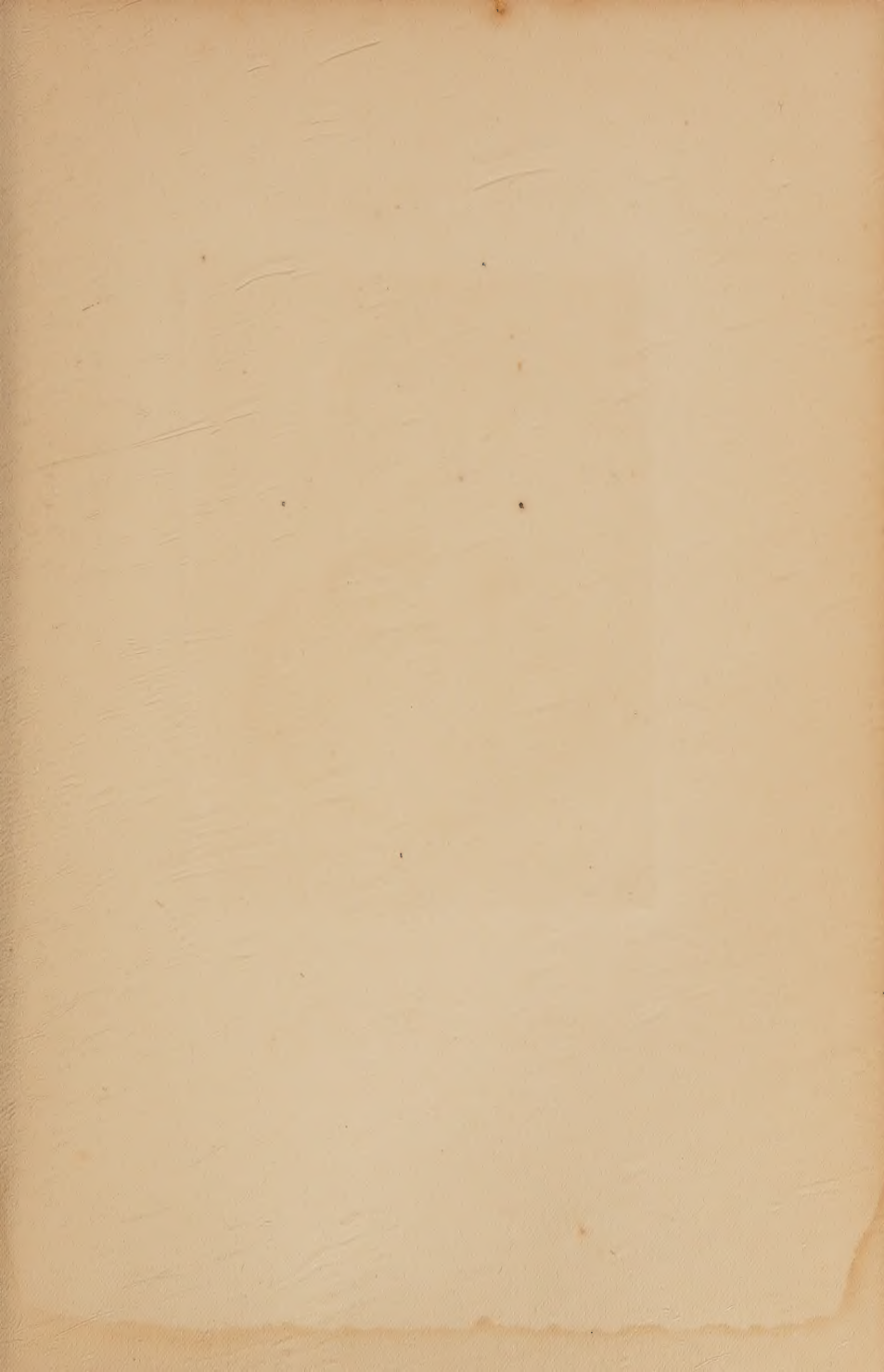
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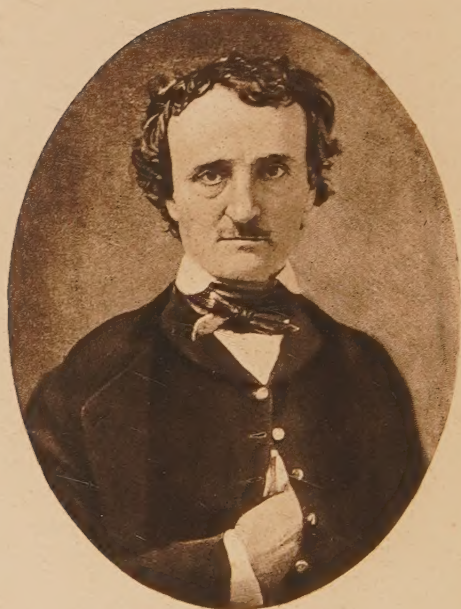
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Johann

Christmas 1919

THE POEMS
OF
EDGAR ALLAN POE





Edgar A. Poe.

From a photograph of a daguerreotype formerly in the possession
of "Stella."

THE POEMS
OF
EDGAR ALLAN POE

COLLECTED AND EDITED, WITH A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION
AND NOTES, BY

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN
AND
GEORGE EDWARD WOODBERRY

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1914

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PREFACE TO THE POEMS

THE text of the poems here adopted is that of the Lorimer Graham copy of the edition of 1845, revised by marginal corrections in Poe's hand. Inasmuch as Poe revised his poems repeatedly and with great care, and seldom returned to an earlier reading, the claim of his latest revision to be accepted as the authorized text seems to the Editors irresistible. For poems not included in the edition of 1845, the latest text published in Poe's lifetime, or, where an earlier text is wanting or was revised, the text of Griswold has been adopted.

All variant readings have been given in the NOTES. The Editors have thought this desirable partly because there is no such illustration in literature of the elaboration of poetry through long-continued and minute verbal processes, and partly because so large a portion of the verse written by Poe perished in those processes. It is believed that the view of the printed sources, here given, is very nearly complete; and to what they afford are added the variants of some early MSS., consisting of a large part of "Tamerlane" and four early poems, in Poe's hand, and of copies of two other early poems in a contemporary hand. The date of the MSS. is, approximately, 1829 or earlier, and they represent Poe's work after the publication of "Tam-

PREFACE TO THE POEMS

erlane" in 1827. They were in the possession of L. A. Wilmer, Esq., who was Poe's companion in Baltimore, and have descended in the Wilmer family as an heirloom. Two leaves, however, which had got separated from the rest, had come into the possession of William Evarts Benjamin, Esq. The Editors desire to thank the owners for the free use of these valuable papers.

THE EDITORS.

NEW YORK, May 5, 1895.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

PAGE

xi

I

POEMS:

THE RAVEN	5
BRIDAL BALLAD	14
THE SLEEPER	16
LENORE	18
DREAM-LAND	20
THE VALLEY OF UNREST	22
THE CITY IN THE SEA	23
TO ZANTE	25
SILENCE	26
THE COLISEUM	27
HYMN	29
ISRAFEL	30
THE HAUNTED PALACE	32
THE CONQUEROR WORM	34
ELDORADO	36
EULALIE	37
THE BELLS	38
ANNABEL LEE	42
ULALUME	44

II

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"	49
----------------------------------	----

III

INVOCATIONS:

TO HELEN	79
TO F——	80
TO ONE IN PARADISE	81
TO F——S. O——D	82

CONTENTS

INVOCATIONS (*continued*):

	PAGE
A VALENTINE	83
AN ENIGMA	84
TO HELEN	85
TO ———	88
TO M. L. S———	89
TO ————	90
FOR ANNIE	91
TO MY MOTHER	95

IV

EARLY POEMS:

TAMERLANE	99
TO SCIENCE	107
AL AARAAF	108
"THE HAPPIEST DAY, THE HAPPIEST HOUR"	122
STANZAS	123
EVENING STAR	125
DREAMS	126
THE LAKE: TO ———	128
SPIRITS OF THE DEAD	129
A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM	131
SONG	132
TO THE RIVER ———	133
TO ———	134
A DREAM	135
ROMANCE	136
FAIRY-LAND	137
ALONE	139

NOTES: TOGETHER WITH A COMPLETE VARIORUM TEXT OF THE POEMS	141
---	-----

ILLUSTRATIONS

PORTRAIT

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH OF A DAGUERRETYPE FORMERLY IN
THE POSSESSION OF "STELLA" *Frontispiece*

PORTRAIT

TO FACE PAGE

FROM THE PHOTOGRAPH OF A DAGUERRETYPE GIVEN BY POE
TO MRS. WHITMAN, FORMERLY IN THE POSSESSION OF WIL-
LIAM COLEMAN 143

PICTURES:

THE RAVEN	8
DREAM-LAND	20
ANNABEL LEE	42
ULALUME	44

FACSIMILE

FROM THE LORIMER GRAHAM COPY (SEE PREFACE TO THIS
VOLUME) SHOWING POE'S ORIGINAL CORRECTIONS . . . 17
By courtesy of the Century Association, owner of the Lorimer Graham Library

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

SMALL as is the body of Poe's metrical work, relative to that of his prose, and in comparison with the amount of verse written by any other American poet of his rank and time, it has sufficed to bring about certain obvious results. First of all, it has established him in the minds of the common people, not as the critic or the tale-writer, but as a poet, and as a poet who, from their notions of his life, was almost the last of those fulfilling old-time traditions of the character. Since the date when "The Raven," let us say, got into the school-readers, — and that was within five years after its appearance in the "American Review," — the public conception of its author has been that of a poet. We have found in the Tales the fullest expression of his genius. These, to his own mind, were his most significant creations. But such is the distinction of poetry that its mere form is taken by the people as the ranking warrant of never so industrious a prose-writer, if he is the author of a few, but veritable songs. This royal prerogative of verse, in point of impression made, and of the attribute with which its author is invested, exists by a law as irrespective of relative mass, and quite as sure, as that of the "hydrostatic paradox" which makes a thin column of water balance the contents of an acred reservoir. Thus it has resulted that Poe is, and doubtless always will be, gazetted as "the poet."

It may also be said of his verse that it has led to

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

more difference of opinion than that of our other poets, one alone excepted. A few lyrics — possibly his most individual, though not necessarily his most imaginative and essentially poetic — are those for which he is widely lauded. The succession has been endless of zealots who, on the score of "The Raven," "The Bells," and "Annabel Lee," set him above poets of whom they have read very little. And he has been the subject of a long-standing dispute among authoritative writers here and abroad, some of whom pronounce him one of the two, or at the most, three American poets really worth attention; while others, of the philosophic bent, regard his verse as very primitive, and its maker as a ballad-monger. Upon the latter class, composed of both realists and transcendentalists, the host of sentimentalists has retaliated, and so a discussion has gone on to the present day.

But neither zeal nor prejudice can put aside data, in view of which dispassionate critics have for some time been in accord as to the nature of Poe's lyrical genius and the resultant quality and value of the following poems. It is clear that they are slight and few in number, but no more slight and few than the relics of other poets, ancient and modern, which have served to establish fame. It is seen that they are largely wrought out from the vague conceptions of the romancer's youth: that he began as a poet, so far as he was anything but a wanderer, and that, notwithstanding his avowal that poetry was his passion and not his purpose, he had will and ambition enough to put in print, once and again, the germinal verses which were brought to such completeness in after years; that throughout life his expression confined itself to one mood, almost to a

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

single key, his purpose not being sufficiently continuous to save his rhythmical gift from prolonged checks to its exercise; finally, that the distinctive feature of his work is found on its artistic and technical side, and is so marked as to constitute his specific addition to poetry, and to justify full consideration. All, in fine, must look upon his verse as small in amount and restricted in motive, and consider his forte to be that of a peculiar melodist, — the originator of certain strains which have been effectual. However monotonous, they have not, like other “catching” devices, proved temporary and wearisome, but have shown themselves founded in nature by still charming the ear and holding their place in song.

With this brief statement of matters upon which agreement has been reached, something can be said in detail. Poe may not have “lisped in numbers,” but he certainly began as a verse-maker when he began to write at all, as is the way of those who have even the rhymester’s gift. His early measures were nebulous in meaning and half-moulded in form, yet his first three books were made up of such alone. Between the volume of 1831 and that of 1845, an industrious professional term, his work as a poet was mainly confined to the development of finished lyrics from the germs contained in those first vague utterances. Meanwhile his fresh invention concerned itself with prose. A true poet is an idealist; the great one, an idealist taking flight from the vantage-ground of truth and reason. Poe was at least the former, and it would appear that his metrical faculty suffered, as has just been said, checks to its exercise rather than an arrest of development. Even his would-be realistic tales of

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

adventure are bizarre in motive and treatment; they are not cast in true naturalism. Setting these aside, however, the existence of "Ligeia," "Usher," "Shadow," "Arnheim," and the like, which fairly may be regarded as prose poems, forbids us wholly to deprecate his halt as a verse-maker, and speaks for the public recognition of him chiefly in his capacity as a poet. That the advance of his lyrical faculty kept pace with, and was aided by, his prose as a running-mate, is shown by the difference between "A Pæan," 1831, and the "Lenore" of 1845; or between almost any poem, save the beauteous "Israfel," in the early volumes, and "The Haunted Palace" of 1839. After fourteen years of journalism and fiction, he began, with "The Raven," a final series of poems, showing the mastery of finish and original invention at which he had arrived, and which he possessed to the last year of his general decline.

Without doubt, a distinctive melody is the element in Poe's verse that first and last has told on every class of readers, — a rhythmical effect which, be it of much or little worth, was its author's own; and to add even one constituent to the resources of an art is what few succeed in doing. He gained hints from other poets toward this contribution, but the *timbre* of his own voice was required for that peculiar music reinforced by the correlative refrain and repetend; a melody, but a monody as well, limited almost to the vibratory recurrence of a single and typical emotion, yet no more palling on the ear than palls the constant sound of a falling stream. It haunted rather than irked the senses, so that the poet was recognized by it, — as Melmoth the Wanderer by the one delicious strain heard wherever he

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

approached. This brought him, on the other hand, the slight of many compeers, and for this the wisest of them spoke of him as the "jingle-man." Yet there is more than this, one may well conceive, in his station as a poet.

Not a few, whose border line between high thinking and plain moralizing is often crossed, have been inclined to leave him out of the counting. One of them, extolling Bryant and Emerson, declares that Poe, as an American poet, is "nowhere." An orator of the Bryant centenary has named a sextet of our national singers, in which the author of "The Raven" is not included. There is an irrepressible conflict between the melodists and the intuitionists. Against this down-east verdict, the belief of foreign judges has been that something worth while was gained by him for English poetry. It has been stated that Tennyson thought him the most remarkable poet the United States had produced, and "not unworthy to stand beside Catullus, the most melodious of the Latins, and Heine, the most tuneful of the Germans." It would be easy to trace the effect of his tone upon various minor lyrists of England and France, and indirectly upon the greater ones. There were lessons to be learned, if only on the technical side, from his rhythm and consonance. In fact, something is always to be caught by the greater artists from the humblest artisans, as from the folk-song of any race or country.

But is it all a matter of technique? Are the few numbers of Poe's entire repertory simply "literary feats"? Is "Annabel Lee" merely "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal"? Is its author fairly classed, by one who admits that we need all instruments "in the perfect orchestra," as "a tinkling triangle among

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

the rest"? The epithets cited are specimens of many indicating the mood, and what underlies the mood, of those with whom he is antipathetic. Our question involves the mysterious sympathies of sound and sense in lyrical poetry, and these involve the secret of all speech itself. Those who regard Poe as only "a verbal poet" may be assured that the fit arbiter is the universalist. It is not given to all art's factors to be of equal worth or import. The view of the intellectualists, with their disdain for technical beauty, is limited; no doubt the view of Poe was limited, — most often, evidently, by the impatience of a non-conformist, for he had the critical sense in which Emerson, for instance, was deficient; and the limitations on both sides were greater for the unconsciousness of both that they existed. It is worth noting that when a bard like Emerson "let himself go," he was more spontaneous, and as a result more finely lyrical, than Poe. On the other hand, Poe's most imaginative numbers have a rare subtlety of thought, and depend least upon his mechanism.

Those persons who, if they care a little for the piano, know no touch of it, fail to understand the sensations excited in others by the personal mastery of a virtuoso over that artificial instrument. Quite as natural is the honest belief of a superior man who applies to Poe's poetry the epithet "valueless." Some of it, for reasons not at all enigmatical to the minstrel tribe, is of extreme suggestiveness and value. Certain pieces are likely to outlast in common repute nineteen-twentieths of our spirited modern fiction, while others, though really of a higher grade, may be cherished in the regard of only the elect few. Both these classes are of a lyrical order,

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

either composed or rewritten in his manhood, and undeniably obtaining their audience through the charm of that music absent for the most part from his ambitious early verse. There is no better proof of his natural force and originality, than his acceptance of the fact that all tracks are not for all runners who wear winged sandals. Clive Newcome felt it due to himself to put on canvas his "Battle of As-saye," which so strangely failed of Academic honors, and the eminent Mr. Gandish, of Soho, kept on painting "Boadiceas" and "Alfreds" to his dying day. Our young poet, as well, tried his hand once and again at the making of a long romantic poem, and, later, in the production of a blank-verse drama, but had the literary good sense, whatsoever his ill-judgment in life, — and the two often go together in a man of genius, — to perceive for himself that the result was something "labored," and not worth the labor except for the experience and practice; that "Tamerlane," "Al Aaraaf," and "Politian" were the outcome of perseverance, and not written with the zest that ministers to one doing what he is born to do. Of course it takes less will-power to refrain than to persist; but it speaks well for one's perception, and for his modesty, when he ceases to attempt things for which he has no vocation, instead of mastering them because they are dimensional and because others have gained fame thereby. In "Aurora Leigh" it is counted "strange . . . that nearly all young poets should write old!" It would be strange indeed if an artist began in any other way. A young poet is no different from the young sculptor or painter, who first is set to copy from accepted models, save that he gropes his way as his own master and in his own studio, — there being as yet,

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

and happily, no class or school for poets: their Academy is the world's book of song. Poe, growing up under the full romantic stress, at the end of the Georgian period, and by temperament himself as much of a romancer as Byron or Moore, inevitably aped the manner and copied the structure of poems he must have known by heart. So we have "Tamerlane," a manifest adumbration of "The Giaour," and "Al Aaraaf," that not unmelodious but inchoate attempt to create a love-legend in verse. The last poem, with its curious leaps from the peaks of Milton to the musky vales of Moore, would be a good travesty on one of the latter poet's pseudo-Oriental romances, if form, scenery, and a conscientious procession of "Notes" could make it so. In his juvenile way, Poe worked just as Moore had done, reading up for his needs, but he mistook the *materia poetica* for poetry itself. There is a bit of verse in it — the invocation to Ligeia — which is like the wraith of beauty, and here and there are other, but fainter, traces of an original gift. A less self-critical genius than Poe would have gone on making more "Tamerlanes" and "Al Aaraafs" until he made them nearly as well as his masters, and none would care for them, there being already enough of their kind. If he never freed his temper from Byronism, he certainly changed the mould and method of his poetry, until he arrived at something absolutely his own — becoming solely a lyrist, and never writing a lyric until possessed of some initiative strain. When in after years he engaged to write and deliver a long poem, his nature revolted; he found it beyond his power, and he fell back upon the unintelligible "Al Aaraaf" as a makeshift with the Boston audience. Other American poets have

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

found it equally impossible to fill a half-hour with verse written to order, and have figured to even less advantage on state occasions. Touches of Poe's natural and final quality are to be found here and there among the fragmentary lyrics in his early volumes, and two of the more complete poems are very striking. "To Helen" is so lovely, though not absolutely flawless, that one wonders it had no companions of its kind. The other is the sonnet "To Science," originally the prelude to "Al Aaraaf," and in this volume placed where it belongs. It may be that Poe was so impressed by the gathering conflict between poetry and science, through pondering upon the antithesis drawn by Coleridge. A young romancer, at the outset of the perturbation involved, could not be expected to await with patience that golden and still distant future when, according to Wordsworth's preface, the poet and the philosopher are to become one. He himself was not without the scientific bent and faculty, but as a poet and recounter his work lay in the opposite extreme.

Mention of the interlude, "Ligeia! Ligeia!" recalls the fact that in his early poems and tales Poe liberally drew upon the rather small stock of pet words, epithets, names, and phrases, which he invented, or kept at hand, for repeated use throughout the imaginative portion of his writings. The "albatross" and "condor" are his birds, no less than the raven; and such names as "Ligeia," "D'Elormie," "Weir," "Yaanek," "Auber," add an effect to the studied art of the pieces in which they appear. It has been pointed out that his familiars are chiefly angels and demons, with an attendance of dreams, echoes, ghouls, gnomes, and mimes, for characteristic service.

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

There is every reason why the element in his poetry which to some appears so valueless should first be considered. He was indeed, and avowedly, a poet of Sound. From his childhood, things must have "beat time to nothing" in his brain, and his natural bent may have been confirmed by some knowledge of Tieck's doctrine that sense in poetry *is* secondary to sound; the truth being, no less, that impassioned thought makes its own gamut, — that sense and sound go together, for reasons which are coming to be scientifically understood. On the latter ground one must surmise that, where lyrical melody is absolute, poetic thought is its undertone, except in the case of a pure fantasia like "Kubla Khan" or the verse of some metrical lunatic — such as more than one of Poe's imitators proved himself to be. Whether or not music is, as Frederick Tennyson entitles it, "the queen of the arts" whose "inexhaustible spring is the soul itself," the lyrist who disdains it, and the critic who disdains the musical lyrist, are of an equal rashness. Poe's own estimate of music was quite as extreme, and perfectly sincere; and with respect to that art, there is no better illustration of its embalming power as an element of poetic expression than the rhythm of Poe's critical master, Coleridge, — whose haunting cadence, rather than his philosophic thought, enthralled the minstrel group to which he was least allied, and whose "Christabel" disclosed to Scott and Byron the accentual law of English prosody. For Poe the vibrations of rhythmical language contained its higher meaning; the libretto was nothing, the score all in all. Take "Ulalume," for instance, because so many pronounce it meaningless, and a farrago of monotonous cadences, and because it is said to violate Lessing's law by trenching

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

on the province of music. Surely, if there is any art which may assume that province, it is the art of speech, and this whether in the rhythm of verse or the more intricate and various rhythm of prose. The effect of verse primarily depends upon the recurrence of accents, measures, vocalizations; and the more stated the recurrence, the less various and potential the rhythm; as when the infinite play of waves changes to a current between measured banks: a shallow river

“to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.”

Ordered measures compel attention, defining and prolonging efficient notes. To make the sense responsive, as one chord responds to the vibrations of another, — to intensify the average hearer's feeling, — iteration comes into play. The rhythm of prose is always changing, and, if recognized, cannot be dwelt upon. Ordinary speech is nearest to pure nature, and we are so little sensible of its flexible rhythm as to be arrested by it no more than by sunlight, or by the influx of the electric current at its highest voltage.

It must be confessed, then, that much of the following poetry, judged by this specific element, is secondary in one or two respects. Technically, because it rarely attains to the lyrical quality that alone can satisfy the delicate ear. In verse, as in a keyed instrument, any advance means finer intervals and more varied range. Poe's sense of time and accent was greater than that of tone. The melody of his pieces oftenest named, though not “infantine,” is elementary — and far from elemental. Its obviousness catches the ear; and many, who are

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

moved by it to their full capacity of feeling, see in him their poet, and therefore the best poet. We owe the more subtle quality of his heptasyllabic verse to early reading of the poet that struck the pure lyrical strain as none other since the Elizabethans — who were lyrists one and all. Shelley, whether by instinct, or having learned it from them, and from his Greek choruses and anthology, wrought the charm of broken cadences and wandering chords. Poe at least felt the spirit of Shelley's monodies, such as the "Lines written among the Euganean Hills," and added something to it in "The Sleeper," "The City in the Sea," and "The Valley of Unrest."

If the poetry of sound, to be real, is also the poetry of sense, it implies a reservation in our estimate of Poe, that we reflect upon structure as a main consideration, and do not at the outset pass from the technique to what the song expresses — to the feeling, the imagination, the sudden glory of thought. We come to this in the end, yet are halted often throughout his later lyrics by the persistence of their metrical devices. In the early verses just named, which he finally brought to completeness, we do find those delicious overtones, and that poetry for poets, which were unwonted to the muse of his country and time. For these one must read "The Sleeper," — even more, "The City in the Sea," of which the light is streaming

"Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers,
Up many and many a marvellous shrine
Whose wreathèd friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

“Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seems pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.”

In one, certainly, of these remodelled pieces, the stanzas finally entitled “To One in Paradise,” the spell of Shelley’s “wandering airs” that “faint” is captured for Poe’s momentary and ethereal mood.

The revision of “Lenore,” originally “A Pæan,” involved his first success with the repetend. There is little in the annals of literary art so curious, and nothing half so revelatory of the successive processes in the handicraft of a fastidious workman, as the first complete Variorum of Poe’s metrical writings, which will be found in the Notes appended to the text adopted for this volume. With the exception of “To Helen” and “Israfel,” his early poems grew slowly, “a cloud that gathered shape,” from the formless and sometimes maundering fragments contained in the volume of 1831, to their consistent beauty in 1845. Even as it finally appeared, “Lenore” did not quite satisfy him, and our text now profits by the marginal changes, in the poet’s hand-writing, on the pages of his own copy of “The Raven and Other Poems.” Justifiable protests are often heard against alterations made by poets in their well-established texts, but Poe had to change his early verse or discard it altogether, and his after-touches, even with respect to “The Raven,” were such as to better the work. For an example of the repetend, as here considered, we

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

need only take the final couplet of any stanza of "Lenore:"

"An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so
young,
A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she died so
young."

It is just as deft and persistent throughout "The Raven;" as exemplified in the lines so often quoted, upon one whom "unmerciful Disaster"

"Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore:
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore" —

and so it characterizes "Eulalie," "The Bells," "For Annie," and "Annabel Lee," reaching its extreme in "Ulalume." The poet surely found his clew to it, just as "Outis" intimated, in Coleridge's wondrous "Rime;" since, though not unknown to English balladry, it does not therein produce the conjuring effect of which we are sensible when we read: —

"And I had done an hellish thing,
And it would work them woe:
For all averred I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
'Ah wretch!' said they, 'the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!'"

The force of the refrain, a twin adjuvant of Poe's verse, — as used, for example, in "The Raven" and

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

"The Bells," — was impressed upon him, most probably, by Miss Barrett's constant resort to it, of which the toll of the passing bell, in "The Rhyme of the Duchess May," is a good instance. Apparently, also, he owed his first idea of the measure of "The Raven," and something of what he would have called the "decora" of that poem, to one or more passages in "Lady Geraldine's Courtship," but only as one musician receives his key from another, to utilize it with a fresh motive and for an original composition. With respect to the repetend and refrain, it must finally be noted that they are the basis of his later manner; that in their combination and mutual reaction they constitute the sign-manual, and the artistic reliance, of Poe in every one of the lyrical poems composed within the last five years of his life, "The Raven" beginning the series.

Two or three of the earlier pieces are distinguished from the rest by the vision, the ideality, the intellectual purpose, which alone can devise and perfect a work of art. "Israfel" came nearer to completeness at once than his other youthful poems, except the fortunate little cameo, — "Helen, thy beauty is to me;" and the *Variorum* shows relatively few changes from the text of 1831. As a rapturous declaration of kinship with the singer "whose heart-strings are a lute" it is its own excuse for any license taken in forcing a passage from the Koran. Some of the lines are transcendent:

"The ecstasies above
With thy burning measures suit:
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
With the fervor of thy lute:
Well may the stars be mute!

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

“Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
Is a world of sweets and sour;
Our flowers are merely — flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.”

The more “Israfel” is studied, the rarer it seems. The lyric phrasing is minstrelsy throughout — the soul of nature mastering a human voice. Poe did well to perfect this brave song without marring its spontaneous beauty; young as he was, he knew when he had been a poet indeed.

An equally captivating poem, in which we have the handling of a distinct theme by an imaginative artist, is that most ideal of lyrical allegories, “The Haunted Palace.” Its author’s allegorical genius was as specific, in both his verse and his romantic prose, as Hawthorne’s — less varied, but at times more poetic. This changeful dream of radiance and gloom, rehearsed by the dreamer in his purest tones, unites, beyond almost any other modern poem, an enchanting melody with a clear imagining, to celebrate one of the most tragical of human fates. The palace, at first risen “like an exhalation” from the meads of Paradise, is now but the shattered and phantasmal relic of its starry prime, and of its inhabitants with their dethroned monarch, the sovereign Reason. Its once lustrous windows, like the distraught eyes of the Cenci, exquisite in her bewilderment, are now the betraying emblems of a lost mind. Still another piece with a defined theme is “The Conqueror Worm.” This has less beauty, and verges on the melodramatic border that is the danger-line of a romanticist. Piteousness is its motive, as so often in the works of Poe, and its power

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

is unquestionable as we see it framed, in the story of Ligeia, like "The Haunted Palace" in that of the fated Usher. The skilful interblending of these poems with the doom and mystery of the prose romances, and that of the stanzas, "To One in Paradise," with the drama of a Venetian night in "The Assignation," render it a question whether the three stories, each so powerful in its kind, were not written as a musician might compose sonatas, to develop the utmost value of the lyrical themes. They do this so effectively as to strengthen the statement that Poe's record as a poet goes beyond his verse bequeathed to us. The prose of his romances, at the most intense pitch, seems to feel an insufficiency, and summons music and allegory to supplement its work.

Thus, in the origin and evolution of verse written before his thirty-fifth year, we find his natural gift unsophisticated, except in the case of a single lyric, by the deliberate methods which he afterwards and successfully employed. If, now, we consider the spirit of all his work as a poet, — it is, in fact, consistent with his theories of poetry in general and of his own in especial, as set forth at the outset, and in time supplemented in "The Poetic Principle" and other essays. His verse is based in truth, as a faithful expression of his most emotional mood — to wit, an exquisite melancholy, all the more exquisite because unalloyed by hope. The compensation given certain natures for a sensitive consciousness of mortality and all its ills involved is that of finding the keenest pleasure in the most ruthless pain. Poe, wholly given to "the luxury of woe," made music of his broodings. If he did not cherish his doom, or bring it on determinedly, that which he prized

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

the most was of a less worth to him when not consecrated by the dread, even the certainty, of its impending loss. His themes were regret, the irreparable, the days that are no more. His intellectual view of the definition and aim of poetry has been briefly noted in an Introduction to the Criticism, but may properly be considered again. It was not so much borrowed from, as confirmed by, what he found in his readings of Coleridge, Mill, and others, who have discoursed upon imagination, emotion, melody, as servitors of the poet and his art. We have his early generalizations upon the province of song. Not truth, but pleasure, he thought to be its object. The pleasure depended upon the quality of lyrical expression, and must be subtle — not obviously defined. Music, he said, is its essential quality, "since the comprehension of sweet sound is our most indefinite conception." To this it may be rejoined that the hearer's definiteness of comprehension depends largely upon his knowledge of music, both as a science and as an art. On the other hand, many who are sensitive to musical expression will accord with Poe's maturer avowal that "it is in music that the soul most nearly attains the supernal end for which it struggles." From the first he was impatient of "metaphysical" verse and of its practitioners. Many years later, he laid stress on his belief "that a long poem does not exist." This statement had been made by others, but seemed to him a necessary inference from any definition of poetry as the voice of emotion; moreover, it tallied with a sense of his own capacity for sustaining an emotional tide, whether of influx or outflow. In Mr. Lang's comment, the point is made that this theory or paradox "shrinks into the com-

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

monplace observation that Poe preferred lyric poetry, and that lyrics are essentially brief." Short poems, in lyrical measures, were in truth the only ones in which he did anything out of the common. Thus he restricts an art to the confines of his own genius, and might as well forbid a musician to compose a symphony or other extended masterpiece. We say "the musician," because music is that other art which, like poetry, operates through successive movements, having as a special function prolongation in time. As for this, all Poe's work shows him as a melodist rather than a harmonist; his ear is more analytic than synthetic, and so is his intellect, except in the structural logic of his briefer forms of poetry and prose narrative. The question turns on the capacity for sustained exaltation on the part of poet or musician, reader or listener. With respect to Poe's lifelong abjuration of "the didactic," honor is due his memory; none attacked its abuse so consistently, and at a time so opportune. Declaring poetry to be the child of taste, he arrives at his clear-cut formula that it is "The Rhythmical Creation of Beauty." If in his analysis of this, — the rhythm of human language being implied, — he had made his last word sufficiently inclusive, the definition would be excellent. But he confines the meaning of "beauty" to æsthetics, and to the one form of sensibility which he terms "supernal," — that of ecstatic sadness and regret.

In the end, continuing from the general to the particular, he still further limited his supernal beauty to the expression of a single motive, by reasoning toward a theme that must be its highest excitant. This he did most fully in the "Philosophy of Composition," with "The Raven" for a paradigm.

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

Since, he argued, the extreme note of beauty is sadness, caused by the tragedy of life and our powerlessness to grasp its meaning or avail against it, the tone of beauty must relate to the irreparable, and its genesis to a supremely pathetic event. The beauty of woman is incomparable, the death of a beloved and beautiful woman the supreme loss and "the most poetical topic in the world." Upon it he would lavish his impassioned music, heightening its effects by every metrical device, and by contrast with something of the quaint and grotesque — as the loveliness and glory of a mediæval structure are intensified by gargoyles, and by weird discordant tracery here and there.

The greater portion of Poe's verse accords with his theory at large. Several of the later poems illustrate it in general and particular. "The Raven" bears out his *ex post facto* analysis to the smallest detail. We have the note of hopelessness, the brooding regret, the artistic value supported by richly romantic properties in keeping; the occasion follows the death of a woman beautiful and beloved; the sinister bird is an emblem of the irreparable, and its voice the sombre "Nevermore." Finally, the melody of this strange poem is that of a vocal dead-march, and so compulsive with its peculiar measure, its refrain and repetends, that in the end even the more critical yielded to its quaintness and fantasy, and accorded it a lasting place in literature. No other modern lyric is better known; none has been more widely translated into foreign tongues or made the subject of more comment. While it cannot be pronounced its author's most poetic composition, nor render him a "poet's poet," it still is the lyric most associated with his name. His seemingly whimsical

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

account of its formation most likely is both true and false. Probably the conception and rough cast of the piece were spontaneous, and the author, then at his prime both as a poet and a critic, saw how it best might be perfected, and finished it somewhat after the method stated in his essay. The analysis will enable no one to supersede imagination by artifice. It may be that Poe never would have written it — that he would have obeyed the workman's instinct to respect the secrecy of art, lest the voluntary exposure of his Muse should be avenged by her — had he not ruminated upon the account given him by Dickens, of the manner in which Godwin wrote "Caleb Williams," namely: that he wrote it "backwards." He "first involved his hero in a web of difficulties, forming the second volume, and then, for the first, cast about him for some mode of accounting for what he had done."

Poe's faculties as a poet being evidently in full vigor when he composed "The Raven," its instant success well might have inclined him to renew their exercise. He did produce a few more lyrics, of which two — "The Bells" and "Annabel Lee" — are almost equally well known, and they were written in the last year of his life, the time in which he was least equal to extended work. If his career had gone on, and he had continued, even at long intervals, to write pieces so distinctive, there would now be small contention as to his rank as an American poet. Apparently he never even attempted to compose unless some strain possessed him in that mysterious fashion known to poets and melodists alone; and this most likely at the abnormal physical and mental crises that recur throughout periods of suffering and demoralization.

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

His interpretative power — which so informs “The Bells” with human consciousness and purpose, until joy, passion, rage, and gloom are the meaning of their strokes and vibrations — is always triumphant when he enters, as in “Ulalume,” his own realm of fantasy, “the limbo of . . . planetary souls.” The last-named poem, by no means a caprice of grotesque sound and phraseology, such as some have deemed it, is certainly unique in craftsmanship, and the extreme development of his genius on its mystical side. The date of this piece supports the legend, which one is fain to believe, that it was conceived in his hour of darkest bereavement. The present writer has said elsewhere that it “seems an improvisation, such as a violinist might play upon the instrument which remained his one thing of worth after the death of a companion who had left him alone with his own soul.” The simple and touching “Annabel Lee,” doubtless also inspired by the memory of his Virginia, appeared after his own death with Griswold’s remarkable obituary of him, in the New York “Tribune.” The refrain and measure of this lyric suggests a reversion in the music-haunted brain of its author, to the songs and melodies that, whether primitive or caught up, are favorites with the colored race, and that must have been familiar to the poet during his childhood in the South.

Little more need here be said of this child of the early century, who gained and long will hold a niche in the world’s Valhalla — not for a many-sided inspiration, since his song is at the opposite extreme from that of those universal poets the greatest of whom has received the epithet of myriad-minded — but as one who gazed so intently at a single point that he became self-hypnotized, and rehearsed most

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

musically the visions of his trance; not through human sympathy or dramatic scope and truth, but through his individuality tempered by the artistic nature which seizes upon one's own grief or exultation for creative use; most of all, perhaps, as one whose prophetic invention anticipated the future, and throve before its time and in a country foreign to its needs — as if a passion-flower should come to growth in some northern forest and at a season when blight is in the air. His music surely was evoked from “unusual strings.” He was not made of stuff to please, nor cared to please, the didactic moralists, since he held that truth and beauty are one, and that beauty is the best antidote to vice — a word synonymous, in his belief, with deformity and ugliness. His song “was made to be sung by night,” yet was the true expression of himself and his world. That world he located out of space, out of time, but his poems are the meteors that traverse it. So far as it was earthly, it was closed about, and barred against the common world, like the walled retreat of Prince Prospero in “The Masque of the Red Death;” and in the same wise his poems become the hourly utterance of that clock of ebony, the chimes from which constrained the revellers to pause in their dancing with strange disconcert, and with portents of they knew not what. His prose at times was poetry, and for the rest its Muse seldom gave place to the sister Muse of song. The prose of poets is traditionally genuine, yet, in our day at least, the greater poets have for the most part written verse chiefly, if not alone. If more of Poe's imaginative work had been cast in metrical form, it might have proved more various and at spells even rapturous and glad. And if the sunshine of his life had been

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEMS

indeed even the shadow of the perfect bliss which he conceived to be the heavenly minstrel's, he would have had a more indubitable warrant for his noble vaunt, that Israfel himself earth-fettered,

“Might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody.”

E. C. S.

I
POEMS

TO THE NOBLEST OF HER SEX
TO THE AUTHOR OF
"THE DRAMA OF EXILE"
TO MISS ELIZABETH BARRETT BARRETT
OF ENGLAND
I DEDICATE THIS VOLUME
WITH THE MOST ENTHUSIASTIC ADMIRATION
AND WITH THE MOST SINCERE ESTEEM.

E. A. P.

PREFACE TO THE COLLECTION OF 1845

THESE trifles are collected and republished chiefly with a view to their redemption from the many improvements to which they have been subjected while going "the rounds of the press." I am naturally anxious that what I have written should circulate as I wrote it, if it circulate at all. In defence of my own taste, nevertheless, it is incumbent on me to say that I think nothing in this volume of much value to the public, or very creditable to myself. Events not to be controlled have prevented me from making, at any time, any serious effort in what, under happier circumstances, would have been the field of my choice. With me poetry has been not a purpose, but a passion; and the passions should be held in reverence; they must not — they cannot at will be excited with an eye to the paltry compensations, or the more paltry commendations, of mankind.

E. A. P.

THE RAVEN

ONCE upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered,
weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten
lore, —

While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came
a tapping,

As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber
door.

“T is some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my
chamber door:

Only this and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak Decem-
ber,

And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon
the floor.

Eagerly I wished the morrow; — vainly I had sought
to borrow

From my books surcease of sorrow — sorrow for the
lost Lenore,

For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels
name Lenore:

Nameless here for evermore.

POEMS

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple
curtain

Thrilled me — filled me with fantastic terrors never felt
before;

So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood
repeating

“ ’T is some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber
door,

Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber
door:

This it is and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no
longer,

“ Sir,” said I, or Madam, truly your forgiveness I
implore;

But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came
rapping,

And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my
chamber door,

That I scarce was sure I heard you ” — here I opened
wide the door: —

Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there
wondering, fearing,

Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to
dream before;

But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave
no token,

And the only word there spoken was the whispered
word, “ Lenore? ”

This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the
word, “ Lenore: ”

Merely this and nothing more,

THE RAVEN

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me
burning,

Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than
before.

"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my
window lattice;

Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery
explore;

Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery
explore:

'T is the wind and nothing more."

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt
and flutter,

In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days
of yore.

Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped
or stayed he;

But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my
chamber door,

Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber
door:

Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into
smiling

By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it
wore, —

"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said,
"art sure no craven,

Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the
Nightly shore:

Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plu-
tonian shore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

POEMS

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse
so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning — little relevancy
bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human
being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his
chamber door,
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his
chamber door,

With such name as “Nevermore.”

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke
only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did
outpour.
Nothing further then he uttered, not a feather then he
fluttered,
Till I scarcely more than muttered, — “Other friends
have flown before;
On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my Hopes have
flown before.”

Then the bird said, “Nevermore.”

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly
spoken,
“Doubtless,” said I, “what it utters is its only stock
and store,
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful
Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one
burden bore:
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden
bore

Of ‘Never — nevermore.’”

THE RAVEN

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,

Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird
and bust and door;

Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking

Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore,

What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous
bird of yore

Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing

To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my
bosom's core;

This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease
reclining

On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light
gloated o'er,

But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light
gloating o'er

She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from
an unseen censer

Swung by seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the
tufted floor.

"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee — by
these angels he hath sent thee

Respite — respite and nepenthe from thy memories of
Lenore!

Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this
lost Lenore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

POEMS

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil! prophet still, if
bird or devil!

Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee
here ashore,

Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land en-
chanted —

On this home by Horror haunted — tell me truly, I
implore:

Is there — *is* there balm in Gilead? — tell me — tell
me, I implore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil — prophet still, if
bird or devil!

By that Heaven that bends above us, by that God we
both adore,

Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant
Aidenn,

It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name
Lenore:

Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels
name Lenore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I
shrieked, upstarting:

"Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's
Plutonian shore!

Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul
hath spoken!

Leave my loneliness unbroken! quit the bust above my
door!

Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form
from off my door!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

THE RAVEN

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting,

On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;

And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,

And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor:

And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor

Shall be lifted — nevermore!

BRIDAL BALLAD

THE ring is on my hand,
And the wreath is on my brow;
Satins and jewels grand
Are all at my command,
And I am happy now.

And my lord he loves me well;
But, when first he breathed his vow,
I felt my bosom swell,
For the words rang as a knell,
And the voice seemed his who fell
In the battle down the dell,
And who is happy now.

But he spoke to reassure me,
And he kissed my pallid brow,
While a revery came o'er me,
And to the church-yard bore me,
And I sighed to him before me,
Thinking him dead D'Elormie,
"Oh, I am happy now!"

And thus the words were spoken,
And this the plighted vow;
And though my faith be broken,
And though my heart be broken,
Here is a ring, as token
That I am happy now!

BRIDAL BALLAD

Would God I could awaken!
For I dream I know not how,
And my soul is sorely shaken
Lest an evil step be taken,
Lest the dead who is forsaken
May not be happy now.

THE SLEEPER

AT midnight, in the month of June,
I stand beneath the mystic moon.
An opiate vapor, dewy, dim,
Exhales from out her golden rim,
And, softly dripping, drop by drop,
Upon the quiet mountain-top,
Steals drowsily and musically
Into the universal valley.
The rosemary nods upon the grave;
The lily lolls upon the wave;
Wrapping the fog about its breast,
The ruin moulders into rest;
Looking like Lethe, see! the lake
A conscious slumber seems to take,
And would not, for the world, awake.
All beauty sleeps!—and lo! where lies
Irene, with her destinies!

O lady bright! can it be right,
This window open to the night?
The wanton airs, from the tree-top,
Laughingly through the lattice drop;
The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,
Flit through thy chamber in and out,
And wave the curtain canopy
So fitfully, so fearfully,
Above the closed and fringed lid
'Neath which thy slumb'ring soul lies hid,
That, o'er the floor and down the wall,
Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall.

THE SLEEPER

O lady dear, hast thou no fear?
Why and what art thou dreaming here?
Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,
A wonder to these garden trees!
Strange is thy pallor: strange thy dress:
Strange, above all, thy length of tress,
And this all solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps. Oh, may her sleep,
Which is enduring, so be deep!
Heaven have her in its sacred keep!
This chamber changed for one more holy,
This bed for one more melancholy,
I pray to God that she may lie
Forever with unopened eye,
While the pale sheeted ghosts go by.

My love, she sleeps. Oh, may her sleep,
As it is lasting, so be deep!
Soft may the worms about her creep!
Far in the forest, dim and old,
For her may some tall vault unfold:
Some vault that oft hath flung its black
And wingèd panels fluttering back,
Triumphant, o'er the crested palls
Of her grand family funerals:
Some sepulchre, remote, alone,
Against whose portal she hath thrown,
In childhood, many an idle stone:
Some tomb from out whose sounding door
She ne'er shall force an echo more,
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin,
It was the dead who groaned within!

LENORE

AH, broken is the golden bowl! the spirit flown
forever!

Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul floats on the
Stygian river;

And, Guy De Vere, hast *thou* no tear? — weep now
or nevermore!

See, on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy love,
Lenore!

Come, let the burial rite be read — the funeral song
be sung:

An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so
young,

A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she died so
young.

“Wretches, ye loved her for her wealth and hated
her for her pride,

And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed her —
that she died!

How *shall* the ritual, then, be read? the requiem
how be sung

By you — by yours, the evil eye, — by yours, the
slandrous tongue

That did to death the innocence that died, and died
so young?”

Peccavimus; but rave not thus! and let a Sabbath
song

Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel no
wrong.

For her, the fair and *debonair*, that now so lowly lies,
The life upon her yellow hair but not within her eyes—
The life still there, upon her hair—the death upon her eyes.

"Avaunt! to-night my heart is light. No dirge will I upraise,
"But waft the angel on her flight with a Pæan of old days!
"Let *no* bell toll!—lest her sweet soul, amid its hallowed mirth,
"Should catch the note, as it doth float—up from the damned
Earth. *Avaunt!—avaunt!*

~~"To friends above,~~ from fiends below, the indignant ghost is
riven—

"From Hell unto a high estate far up within the Heaven—

"From grief and groan, to a golden throne, beside the King of
Heaven!

CATHOLIC HYMN.

At morn—at noon—at twilight dim—
Maria! thou hast heard my hymn!
In joy and wo—in good and ill—
Mother of God, be with me still!
When the Hours flew brightly by,
And not a cloud obscured the sky,
My soul, lest it should truant be,
Thy grace did guide to thine and thee;
Now, when storms of Fate o'ercast
Darkly my Present and my Past,
Let my Future radiant shine
With sweet hopes of thee and thine!

*Let me see her soul
Shine when she rises
And I will be with her
That waft the angel on her flight with a Pæan of old days!*

LENORE

The sweet Lenore hath gone before, with Hope that
flew beside,
Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should have
been thy bride:
For her, the fair and debonair, that now so lowly
lies,
The life upon her yellow hair but not within her eyes;
The life still there, upon her hair — the death upon
her eyes.

“Avaunt! avaunt! from fiends below, the indignant
ghost is riven —
From Hell unto a high estate far up within the
Heaven —
From grief and groan, to a golden throne, beside the
King of Heaven!
Let no bell toll, then, — lest her soul, amid its hal-
lowed mirth,
Should catch the note as it doth float up from the
damnèd Earth!
And I! — to-night my heart is light! — no dirge will
I upraise,
But waft the angel on her flight with a Pæan of old
days!”

DREAM-LAND

BY a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named Night,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have reached these lands but newly
From an ultimate dim Thule:
From a wild weird clime that lieth, sublime,
Out of Space — out of Time.

Bottomless vales and boundless floods,
And chasms and caves and Titan woods,
With forms that no man can discover
For the tears that drip all over;
Mountains toppling evermore
Into seas without a shore;
Seas that restlessly aspire,
Surging, unto skies of fire;
Lakes that endlessly outspread
Their lone waters, lone and dead, —
Their still waters, still and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily.

By the lakes that thus outspread
Their lone waters, lone and dead, —
Their sad waters, sad and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily;
By the mountains — near the river
Murmuring lowly, murmuring ever;
By the gray woods, by the swamp
Where the toad and the newt encamp;



DREAM-LAND

By the dismal tarns and pools
Where dwell the Ghouls;
By each spot the most unholy,
In each nook most melancholy, —
There the traveller meets aghast
Sheeted Memories of the Past:
Shrouded forms that start and sigh
As they pass the wanderer by,
White-robed forms of friends long given,
In agony, to the Earth — and Heaven.

For the heart whose woes are legion
'T is a peaceful, soothing region;
For the spirit that walks in shadow
'T is — oh, 't is an Eldorado!
But the traveller, travelling through it,
May not — dare not openly view it;
Never its mysteries are exposed
To the weak human eye unclosed;
So wills its King, who hath forbid
The uplifting of the fringed lid;
And thus the sad Soul that here passes
Beholds it but through darkened glasses.

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named Night,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have wandered home but newly
From this ultimate dim Thule.

THE VALLEY OF UNREST

ONCE it smiled a silent dell
Where the people did not dwell;
They had gone unto the wars,
Trusting to the mild-eyed stars,
Nightly, from their azure towers,
To keep watch above the flowers,
In the midst of which all day
The red sunlight lazily lay.
Now each visitor shall confess
The sad valley's restlessness.
Nothing there is motionless,
Nothing save the airs that brood
Over the magic solitude.
Ah, by no wind are stirred those trees
That palpitate like the chill seas
Around the misty Hebrides!
Ah, by no wind those clouds are driven
That rustle through the unquiet Heaven
Uneasily, from morn till even,
Over the violets there that lie
In myriad types of the human eye,
Over the lilies there that wave
And weep above a nameless grave!
They wave: — from out their fragrant tops
Eternal dews come down in drops.
They weep: — from off their delicate stems
Perennial tears descend in gems.

THE CITY IN THE SEA

LO! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst and the
best
Have gone to their eternal rest.
There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not)
Resemble nothing that is ours.
Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy Heaven come down
On the long night-time of that town;
But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently,
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free:
Up domes, up spires, up kingly halls,
Up fanes, up Babylon-like walls,
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers,
Up many and many a marvellous shrine
Whose wreathèd friezes interwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,

POEMS

While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves
Yawn level with the luminous waves;
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye, —
Not the gayly-jewelled dead,
Tempt the waters from their bed;
For no ripples curl, alas,
Along that wilderness of glass;
No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea;
No heavings hint that winds have been
On seas less hideously serene!

But lo, a stir is in the air!
The wave — there is a movement there!
As if the towers had thrust aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide;
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven!
The waves have now a redder glow,
The hours are breathing faint and low;
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence.

TO ZANTE

FAIR isle, that from the fairest of all flowers
Thy gentlest of all gentle names dost take,
How many memories of what radiant hours
At sight of thee and thine at once awake!
How many scenes of what departed bliss,
How many thoughts of what entombèd hopes,
How many visions of a maiden that is
No more — no more upon thy verdant slopes!
No more! alas, that magical sad sound
Transforming all! Thy charms shall please no
more,
Thy memory no more. Accursèd ground!
Henceforth I hold thy flower-enamelled shore,
O hyacinthine isle! O purple Zante!
“Isola d’oro! Fior di Levante!”

SILENCE

THERE are some qualities, some incorporate things,

That have a double life, which thus is made
A type of that twin entity which springs

From matter and light, evinced in solid and shade.
There is a twofold Silence — sea and shore,

Body and soul. One dwells in lonely places,
Newly with grass o'ergrown; some solemn graces,
Some human memories and tearful lore,

Render him terrorless: his name's "No More."

He is the corporate Silence: dread him not:

No power hath he of evil in himself;
But should some urgent fate (untimely lot!)

Bring thee to meet his shadow (nameless elf,
That haunteth the lone regions where hath trod
No foot of man), commend thyself to God!

THE COLISEUM

TYPE of the antique Rome! Rich reliquary
Of lofty contemplation left to Time
By buried centuries of pomp and power!
At length — at length — after so many days
Of weary pilgrimage and burning thirst
(Thirst for the springs of lore that in thee lie),
I kneel, an altered and an humble man,
Amid thy shadows, and so drink within
My very soul thy grandeur, gloom, and glory.

Vastness, and Age, and Memories of Eld!
Silence, and Desolation, and dim Night!
I feel ye now, I feel ye in your strength,
O spells more sure than e'er Judæan king
Taught in the gardens of Gethsemane!
O charms more potent than the rapt Chaldee
Ever drew down from out the quiet stars!

Here, where a hero fell, a column falls;
Here, where the mimic eagle glared in gold,
A midnight vigil holds the swarthy bat;
Here, where the dames of Rome their gilded hair
Waved to the wind, now wave the reed and thistle;
Here, where on golden throne the monarch lolled,
Glides, spectre-like, unto his marble home,
Lit by the wan light of the hornèd moon,
The swift and silent lizard of the stones.

POEMS

But stay! these walls, these ivy-clad arcades,
These mouldering plinths, these sad and blackened
 shafts,
These vague entablatures, this crumbling frieze,
These shattered cornices, this wreck, this ruin,
These stones — alas! these gray stones — are they all,
All of the famed and the colossal left
By the corrosive Hours to Fate and me?

“Not all” — the Echoes answer me — “not all!
Prophetic sounds and loud arise forever
From us, and from all Ruin, unto the wise,
As melody from Memnon to the Sun.
We rule the hearts of mightiest men — we rule
With a despotic sway all giant minds.
We are not impotent, we pallid stones:
Not all our power is gone, not all our fame,
Not all the magic of our high renown,
Not all the wonder that encircles us,
Not all the mysteries that in us lie,
Not all the memories that hang upon
And cling around about us as a garment,
Clothing us in a robe of more than glory.”

HYMN

A^T morn — at noon — at twilight dim,
Maria! thou hast heard my hymn.
In joy and woe, in good and ill,
Mother of God, be with me still!
When the hours flew brightly by,
And not a cloud obscured the sky,
My soul, lest it should truant be,
Thy grace did guide to thine and thee.
Now, when storms of fate o'ercast
Darkly my Present and my Past,
Let my Future radiant shine
With sweet hopes of thee and thine!

ISRAFEL

And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute,
and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.

Koran.

IN Heaven a spirit doth dwell
Whose heart-strings are a lute;
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy stars (so legends tell),
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
In her highest noon,
The enamored moon
Blushes with love,
While, to listen, the red levin
(With the rapid Pleiads, even,
Which were seven)
Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
And the other listening things)
That Israfeli's fire
Is owing to that lyre
By which he sits and sings,
The trembling living wire
Of those unusual strings.

ISRAFEL

But the skies that angel trod,
Where deep thoughts are a duty,
Where Love's a grown-up God,
Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore thou art not wrong,
Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
Best bard, because the wisest:
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above
With thy burning measures suit:
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
With the fervor of thy lute:
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
Is a world of sweets and sour;
Our flowers are merely — flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
From my lyre within the sky.

THE HAUNTED PALACE

I N the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace —
Radiant palace — reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion,
It stood there;
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair.

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow
(This — all this — was in the olden
Time long ago),
And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A wingèd odor went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley
Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically,
To a lute's well-tunèd law,
Round about a throne where, sitting,
PorphYROGENE,
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
And sparkling evermore,

THE HAUNTED PALACE

A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate;
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)

And round about his home the glory
That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

And travellers now within that valley
Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms that move fantastically
To a discordant melody;
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out forever,
And laugh — but smile no more.

THE CONQUEROR WORM

L O! 't is a gala night
Within the lonesome latter years.
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in a theatre to see
A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,
Mutter and mumble low,
And hither and thither fly;
Mere puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their condor wings
Invisible Woe.

That motley drama — oh, be sure
It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased for evermore
By a crowd that seize it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
To the self-same spot;
And much of Madness, and more of Sin,
And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see amid the mimic rout
A crawling shape intrude:

THE CONQUEROR WORM

A blood-red thing that writhes from out
The scenic solitude!
It writhes — it writhes! — with mortal pangs
The mimes become its food,
And seraphs sob at vermin fangs
In human gore imbued.

Out — out are the lights — out all!
And over each quivering form
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
While the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, “Man,”
And its hero, the Conqueror Worm.

ELDORADO

GAYLY bedight,
A gallant knight,
In sunshine and in shadow,
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old,
This knight so bold,
And o'er his heart a shadow
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow:
"Shadow," said he,
"Where can it be,
This land of Eldorado?"

"Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,"
The shade replied,
"If you seek for Eldorado!"

EULALIE

I DWELT alone
In a world of moan,
And my soul was a stagnant tide,
Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my blushing
bride,
Till the yellow-haired young Eulalie became my smiling
bride.

Ah, less — less bright
The stars of the night
Than the eyes of the radiant girl!
And never a flake
That the vapor can make
With the moon-tints of purple and pearl
Can vie with the modest Eulalie's most unregarded
curl,
Can compare with the bright-eyed Eulalie's most
humble and careless curl.

Now doubt — now pain
Come never again,
For her soul gives me sigh for sigh;
And all day long
Shines, bright and strong,
Astarte within the sky,
While ever to her dear Eulalie upturns her matron eye,
While ever to her young Eulalie upturns her violet eye.

THE BELLS

I

HEAR the sledges with the bells,
Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!
While the stars, that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells —
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

II

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells!
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight!
From the molten-golden notes,
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon!

THE BELLS

Oh, from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
 How it swells!
 How it dwells
 On the Future! how it tells
 Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
 Of the bells, bells, bells,
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells —
To the rhyiming and the chiming of the bells!

III

Hear the loud alarum bells,
 Brazen bells!
What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!
In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright!
 Too much horrified to speak,
 They can only shriek, shriek,
 Out of tune,
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire,
 Leaping higher, higher, higher,
 With a desperate desire,
 And a resolute endeavor
Now — now to sit or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.
 Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
 What a tale their terror tells
 Of Despair!
 How they clang, and clash, and roar!
 What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!

POEMS

Yet the ear it fully knows,
By the twanging
And the clanging,
How the danger ebbs and flows;
Yet the ear distinctly tells,
In the jangling
And the wrangling,
How the danger sinks and swells, —
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells,
Of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells —
In the clamor and the clangor of the bells!

IV

Hear the tolling of the bells,
Iron bells!
What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!
In the silence of the night
How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone!
For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan.
And the people — ah, the people,
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone,
And who tolling, tolling, tolling
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone —
They are neither man nor woman,
They are neither brute nor human,
They are Ghouls:

THE BELLS

And their king it is who tolls;
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,

Rolls

A pæan from the bells;
And his merry bosom swells
With the pæan of the bells,
And he dances, and he yells:

Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the pæan of the bells,

Of the bells:

Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the throbbing of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells —

To the sobbing of the bells;
Keeping time, time, time,
As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rhyme,
To the rolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells:

To the tolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells —

To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

ANNABEL LEE

IT was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love,
I and my Annabel Lee;
With a love that the wingèd seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me;
Yes! that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.





ANNABEL LEE

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we,
Of many far wiser than we;
And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling — my darling — my life and my bride,
In her sepulchre there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

ULALUME

THE skies they were ashen and sober;
The leaves they were crispèd and sere,
The leaves they were withering and sere;
It was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
In the misty mid region of Weir:
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul —
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
As the scoriac rivers that roll,
As the lavas that restlessly roll
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
In the ultimate climes of the pole,
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere,
Our memories were treacherous and sere,
For we knew not the month was October,
And we marked not the night of the year,
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)

ULALUME

We noted not the dim lake of Auber
 (Though once we had journeyed down here),
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber
 Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent
 And star-dials pointed to morn,
 As the star-dials hinted of morn,
At the end of our path a liquescent
 And nebulous lustre was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
 Arose with a duplicate horn,
Astarte's bediamonded crescent
 Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said — "She is warmer than Dian:
 She rolls through an ether of sighs,
 She revels in a region of sighs:
She has seen that the tears are not dry on
 These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion
 To point us the path to the skies,
 To the Lethean peace of the skies:
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
 To shine on us with her bright eyes:
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
 With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
 Said — "Sadly this star I mistrust,
 Her pallor I strangely mistrust:
Oh, hasten! — oh, let us not linger!
 Oh, fly! — let us fly! — for we must."

POEMS

In terror she spoke, letting sink her
 Wings until they trailed in the dust;
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
 Plumes till they trailed in the dust,
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied — "This is nothing but dreaming:
 Let us on by this tremulous light!
 Let us bathe in this crystalline light!
Its sibyllic splendor is beaming
 With hope and in beauty to-night:
See, it flickers up the sky through the night!
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
 And be sure it will lead us aright:
We safely may trust to a gleaming
 That cannot but guide us aright,
Since it flickers up to Heaven through the
 night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
 And tempted her out of her gloom,
 And conquered her scruples and gloom;
And we passed to the end of the vista,
 But were stopped by the door of a tomb,
 By the door of a legended tomb;
And I said — "What is written, sweet sister,
 On the door of this legended tomb?"
She replied — "Ulalume — Ulalume —
 'T is the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
 As the leaves that were crispèd and sere,
 As the leaves that were withering and sere,
And I cried — "It was surely October
 On this very night of last year

ULALUME

That I journeyed — I journeyed down here,
That I brought a dread burden down here:
On this night of all nights in the year,
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber,
This misty mid region of Weir:
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.”

II

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

POLITIAN, Earl of Leicester

DI BROGLIO, a Roman Duke

COUNT CASTIGLIONE, his Son

BALDAZZAR, Duke of Surrey, Friend to POLITIAN

A MONK

LALAGE

ALESSANDRA, betrothed to CASTIGLIONE

JACINTA, Maid to LALAGE

The SCENE lies in Rome

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"

AN UNPUBLISHED DRAMA

I

ROME. — A Hall in a Palace. ALESSANDRA and CASTIGLIONE.

ALESSANDRA

Thou art sad, Castiglione.

CASTIGLIONE

Sad! — not I.

Oh, I'm the happiest, happiest man in Rome!
A few days more, thou knowest, my Alessandra,
Will make thee mine. Oh, I am very happy!

ALESSANDRA

Methinks thou hast a singular way of showing
Thy happiness! — what ails thee, cousin of mine?
Why didst thou sigh so deeply?

CASTIGLIONE

Did I sigh?

I was not conscious of it. It is a fashion,
A silly — a most silly fashion I have
When I am very happy. Did I sigh? (*sighing*)

ALESSANDRA

Thou didst. Thou art not well. Thou hast indulged
Too much of late, and I am vexed to see it.

POEMS

Late hours and wine, Castiglione, — these
Will ruin thee! thou art already altered;
Thy looks are haggard; nothing so wears away
The constitution as late hours and wine.

CASTIGLIONE (*musings*)

Nothing, fair cousin, nothing, not even deep sorrow,
Wears it away like evil hours and wine.
I will amend.

ALESSANDRA

Do it! I would have thee drop
Thy riotous company, too — fellows low born;
Ill suit the like with old Di Broglio's heir
And Alessandra's husband.

CASTIGLIONE

I will drop them.

ALESSANDRA

Thou wilt — thou must. Attend thou also more
To thy dress and equipage; they are over plain
For thy lofty rank and fashion; much depends
Upon appearances.

CASTIGLIONE

I'll see to it.

ALESSANDRA

Then see to it! pay more attention, sir,
To a becoming carriage; much thou wantest
In dignity.

CASTIGLIONE

Much, much, oh, much I want
In proper dignity.

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"

ALESSANDRA (*haughtily*)

Thou mockest me, sir!

CASTIGLIONE (*abstractedly*)

Sweet, gentle Lalage!

ALESSANDRA

Heard I aright?

I speak to him — he speaks of Lalage!

Sir Count! (*places her hand on his shoulder*) what
art thou dreaming? (*aside*) He's not well!

What ails thee, sir?

CASTIGLIONE (*starting*)

Cousin! fair cousin! — madam!

I crave thy pardon — indeed, I am not well.

Your hand from off my shoulder, if you please.

This air is most oppressive. — Madam — the Duke!

Enter DI BROGLIO

DI BROGLIO

My son, I've news for thee! — hey? — what's the matter? (*observing ALESSANDRA*)

I' the pouts? Kiss her, Castiglione! kiss her,

You dog! and make it up, I say, this minute!

I've news for you both. Politian is expected

Hourly in Rome — Politian, Earl of Leicester.

We'll have him at the wedding. 'T is his first visit

To the imperial city.

ALESSANDRA

What! Politian

Of Britain, Earl of Leicester?

DI BROGLIO

The same, my love.

We'll have him at the wedding. A man quite young

POEMS

In years, but gray in fame. I have not seen him,
But rumor speaks of him as of a prodigy
Preëminent in arts and arms, and wealth,
And high descent. We 'll have him at the wedding.

ALESSANDRA

I have heard much of this Politian.
Gay, volatile, and giddy, is he not,
And little given to thinking?

DI BROGLIO

Far from it, love.
No branch, they say, of all philosophy
So deep abstruse he has not mastered it.
Learnèd as few are learnèd.

ALESSANDRA

'T is very strange!
I have known men have seen Politian
And sought his company. They speak of him
As of one who entered madly into life,
Drinking the cup of pleasure to the dregs.

CASTIGLIONE

Ridiculous! Now *I* have seen Politian
And know him well: nor learnèd nor mirthful he.
He is a dreamer, and a man shut out
From common passions.

DI BROGLIO

Children, we disagree.
Let us go forth and taste the fragrant air
Of the garden. Did I dream, or did I hear
Politian was a melancholy man?

[*exeunt.*]

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"

II

A lady's apartment, with a window open and looking into a garden. LALAGE, in deep mourning, reading at a table on which lie some books and a hand-mirror. In the background JACINTA (a servant maid) leans carelessly upon a chair.

LALAGE

Jacinta! is it thou?

JACINTA (*pertly*)

Yes, ma'am, I'm here.

LALAGE

I did not know, Jacinta, you were in waiting.
Sit down — let not my presence trouble you —
Sit down — for I am humble, most humble.

JACINTA (*aside*)

'T is time.

(JACINTA *seats herself in a sidelong manner upon the chair, resting her elbows upon the back, and regarding her mistress with a contemptuous look. LALAGE continues to read*)

LALAGE

"It in another climate, so he said,
Bore a bright golden flower, but not i' this soil!"
(*pauses, turns over some leaves, and resumes*)
"No lingering winters there, nor snow, nor shower,
But Ocean ever to refresh mankind
Breathes the shrill spirit of the western wind."
Oh, beautiful! most beautiful! how like
To what my fevered soul doth dream of Heaven!
O happy land! (*pauses*)

POEMS

She died — the maiden died!
O still more happy maiden who couldst die!
Jacinta!

(JACINTA *returns no answer, and LALAGE presently resumes*)

Again, — a similar tale
Told of a beauteous dame beyond the sea.
Thus speaketh one Ferdinand in the words of the
play, —
“She died full young;” one Bossola answers him, —
“I think not so — her infelicity
Seemed to have years too many.” — Ah, luckless lady!
Jacinta! (*still no answer*)

Here's a far sterner story,
But like — oh, very like — in its despair,
Of that Egyptian queen, winning so easily
A thousand hearts — losing at length her own.
She died. Thus endeth the history, and her maids
Lean over her and weep, two gentle maids
With gentle names — Eiros and Charmion:
Rainbow and Dove!

Jacinta!

JACINTA (*pettishly*)

Madam, what is it?

LALAGE

Wilt thou, my good Jacinta, be so kind
As go down in the library and bring me
The Holy Evangelists?

JACINTA

Pshaw!

[*exit.*

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"

LALAGE

If there be balm
For the wounded spirit in Gilead, it is there.
Dew in the night-time of my bitter trouble
Will there be found, — "dew sweeter far than that
Which hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill."
(*re-enter JACINTA, and throws a volume on the table*)

JACINTA

There, ma'am, 's the book. (*aside*) Indeed, she is very
troublesome.

LALAGE (*astonished*)

What did'st thou say, Jacinta? Have I done aught
To grieve thee or to vex thee? — I am sorry.
For thou hast served me long and ever been
Trustworthy and respectful. (*resumes her reading*)

JACINTA (*aside*)

I can't believe
She has any more jewels — no — no — she gave me all.

LALAGE

What didst thou say, Jacinta? Now I bethink me,
Thou hast not spoken lately of thy wedding.
How fares good Ugo, and when is it to be?
Can I do aught, is there no further aid
Thou needest, Jacinta?

JACINTA (*aside*)

"Is there no *further* aid?"
That 's meant for me. (*aloud*) I'm sure, madam, you
need not
Be always throwing those jewels in my teeth.

POEMS

LALAGE

Jewels, Jacinta! Now, indeed, Jacinta,
I thought not of the jewels.

JACINTA

Oh! perhaps not!
But then I might have sworn it. After all,
There's Ugo says the ring is only paste,
For he's sure the Count Castiglione never
Would have given a real diamond to such as you;
And at the best I'm certain, madam, you cannot
Have use for jewels *now*. But I might have sworn it.
[*exit.*]

(LALAGE *bursts into tears and leans her head upon
the table; after a short pause raises it*)

LALAGE

Poor Lalage! and is it come to this? —
Thy servant maid! — but courage! — 't is but a viper
Whom thou hast cherished to sting thee to the soul!
(*taking up the mirror*)
Ha! here at least 's a friend — too much a friend
In earlier days — a friend will not deceive thee.
Fair mirror and true! now tell me (for thou canst)
A tale, a pretty tale — and heed thou not
Though it be rife with woe. It answers me.
It speaks of sunken eyes and wasted cheeks,
And Beauty long deceased — remembers me
Of Joy departed — Hope, the seraph Hope,
Inurnèd and entombed: — now, in a tone
Low, sad, and solemn, but most audible,
Whispers of early grave untimely yawning
For ruined maid. Fair mirror and true, thou liest not:
Thou hast no end to gain, no heart to break;

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"

Castiglione lied who said he loved;

Thou true — he false, false, false!

*(while she speaks, a monk enters her apartment,
and approaches unobserved)*

MONK

Refuge thou hast,

Sweet daughter, in Heaven. Think of eternal things,

Give up thy soul to penitence, and pray!

LALAGE (*arising hurriedly*)

I *cannot* pray! My soul is at war with God!

The frightful sounds of merriment below

Disturb my senses — go! I cannot pray;

The sweet airs from the garden worry me;

Thy presence grieves me — go! thy priestly raiment

Fills me with dread, thy ebony crucifix

With horror and awe!

MONK

Think of thy precious soul!

LALAGE

Think of my early days! think of my father

And mother in Heaven; think of our quiet home,

And the rivulet that ran before the door;

Think of my little sisters — think of them!

And think of me! think of my trusting love

And confidence — his vows — my ruin — think — think

Of my unspeakable misery! — begone!

Yet stay, yet stay! — what was it thou saidst of prayer

And penitence? Didst thou not speak of faith

And vows before the throne?

MONK

I did.

POEMS

LALAGE

'T is well.

There *is* a vow were fitting should be made,
A sacred vow, imperative and urgent,
A solemn vow!

MONK

Daughter, this zeal is well.

LALAGE

Father, this zeal is anything but well.
Hast thou a crucifix fit for this thing,
A crucifix whereon to register
This sacred vow? (*he hands her his own*)
Not that — oh, no! — no! — no!
(*shuddering*)

Not that! Not that! — I tell thee, holy man,
Thy raiments and thy ebony cross affright me.
Stand back! I have a crucifix myself, —
I have a crucifix! Methinks 't were fitting
The deed, the vow, the symbol of the deed,
And the deed's register should tally, father!
(*draws a cross-handled dagger and raises it on high*)
Behold the cross wherewith a vow like mine
Is written in Heaven!

MONK

Thy words are madness, daughter,
And speak a purpose unholy — thy lips are livid —
Thine eyes are wild — tempt not the wrath divine!
Pause ere too late! — oh, be not — be not rash!
Swear not the oath — oh, swear it not!

LALAGE

'T is sworn

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"

III

An apartment in a palace. POLITIAN and BALDAZZAR.

BALDAZZAR

Arouse thee now, Politian!

Thou must not — nay indeed, indeed, thou shalt not
Give way unto these humors. Be thyself.
Shake off the idle fancies that beset thee,
And live, for now thou diest.

POLITIAN

Not so, Baldazzar.

Surely I live.

BALDAZZAR

Politian, it doth grieve me

To see thee thus.

POLITIAN

Baldazzar, it doth grieve me

To give thee cause for grief, my honored friend.
Command me, sir! what wouldst thou have me do?
At thy behest I will shake off that nature
Which from my forefathers I did inherit,
Which with my mother's milk I did imbibe,
And be no more Politian, but some other.
Command me, sir!

BALDAZZAR

To the field then — to the field —

To the senate or the field.

POEMS

POLITIAN

Alas! alas!

There is an imp would follow me even there;
There is an imp *hath* followed me even there;
There is — what voice was that?

BALDAZZAR

I heard it not.

I heard not any voice except thine own,
And the echo of thine own.

POLITIAN

Then I but dreamed.

BALDAZZAR

Give not thy soul to dreams! the camp, the court,
Befit thee; Fame awaits thee; Glory calls, —
And her, the trumpet-tongued, thou wilt not hear
In hearkening to imaginary sounds
And phantom voices.

POLITIAN

It *is* a phantom voice! —
Didst thou not hear it *then*?

BALDAZZAR

I heard it not.

POLITIAN

Thou heardest it not! — Baldazzar, speak no more
To me, Politian, of thy camps and courts.
Oh! I am sick, sick, sick, even unto death,
Of the hollow and high-sounding vanities
Of the populous earth. Bear with me yet awhile!
We have been boys together — school-fellows,
And now are friends, yet shall not be so long;

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"

For in the eternal city thou shalt do me
A kind and gentle office; and a Power —
A Power august, benignant and supreme —
Shall then absolve thee of all further duties
Unto thy friend.

BALDAZZAR

Thou speakest a fearful riddle
I *will* not understand.

POLITIAN

Yet now as fate
Approaches, and the Hours are breathing low,
The sands of time are changed to golden grains
And dazzle me, Baldazzar. Alas! alas!
I cannot die, having within my heart
So keen a relish for the beautiful
As hath been kindled within it. Methinks the air
Is balmier now than it was wont to be;
Rich melodies are floating in the winds;
A rarer loveliness bedecks the earth,
And with a holier lustre the quiet moon
Sitteth in Heaven. — Hist! hist! thou canst not say
Thou hearest not now, Baldazzar?

BALDAZZAR

Indeed, I hear not.

POLITIAN

Not hear it! — listen now — listen! — the faintest
sound
And yet the sweetest that ear ever heard!
A lady's voice! and sorrow in the tone! —
Baldazzar, it oppresses me like a spell!
Again! again! how solemnly it falls
Into my heart of hearts! that eloquent voice

POEMS

Surely I never heard — yet it were well,
Had I but heard it with its thrilling tones
In earlier days.

BALDAZZAR

I myself hear it now.

Be still! — the voice, if I mistake not greatly,
Proceeds from yonder lattice, which you may see
Very plainly through the window; it belongs —
Does it not — unto this palace of the Duke?
The singer is undoubtedly beneath
The roof of His Excellency, and perhaps
Is even that Alessandra of whom he spoke
As the betrothed of Castiglione,
His son and heir.

POLITIAN

Be still! — it comes again.

VOICE (*very faintly*)

“And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus,
Who have loved thee so long
In wealth and woe among?
And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus?

Say nay — say nay!”

BALDAZZAR

The song is English, and I oft have heard it
In merry England — never so plaintively.
Hist! hist! it comes again.

VOICE (*more loudly*)

“Is it so strong
As for to leave me thus,

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"

Who have loved thee so long
In wealth and woe among?
And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus?

Say nay — say nay!"

BALDAZZAR

'T is hushed, and all is still!

POLITIAN

All is not still.

BALDAZZAR

Let us go down.

POLITIAN

Go down, Baldazzar, go!

BALDAZZAR

The hour is growing late — the Duke awaits us;
Thy presence is expected in the hall
Below. What ails thee, Earl Politian?

VOICE (*distinctly*)

"Who have loved thee so long,
In wealth and woe among!
And is thy heart so strong?
Say nay — say nay!"

BALDAZZAR

Let us descend! — 't is time. Politian, give
These fancies to the wind. Remember, pray,
Your bearing lately savored much of rudeness
Unto the Duke. Arouse thee, and remember!

POEMS

POLITIAN

Remember? I do. Lead on! I *do* remember.

(*going*)

Let us descend. Believe me, I would give,
Freely would give the broad lands of my earldom
To look upon the face hidden by yon lattice;
“To gaze upon that veiled face, and hear
Once more that silent tongue.”

BALDAZZAR

Let me beg you, sir,
Descend with me — the Duke may be offended.
Let us go down, I pray you.

VOICE (*loudly*)

“Say nay! — say nay!”

POLITIAN (*aside*)

’T is strange! — ’t is very strange — methought the
voice

Chimed in with my desires and bade me stay.

(*approaching the window*)

Sweet voice! I heed thee, and will surely stay.
Now be this fancy, by Heaven, or be it fate,
Still will I not descend. Baldazzar, make
Apology unto the Duke for me;
I go not down to-night.

BALDAZZAR

Your lordship’s pleasure
Shall be attended to. Good-night, Politian.

POLITIAN

Good-night, my friend, good-night.

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"

IV

The gardens of a palace — moonlight. LALAGE and POLITIAN.

LALAGE

And dost thou speak of love
To *me*, Politian? — dost thou speak of love
To Lalage? — ah, woe — ah, woe is me!
This mockery is most cruel, most cruel indeed!

POLITIAN

Weep not! oh, sob not thus! — thy bitter tears
Will madden me. Oh, mourn not, Lalage;
Be comforted! I know — I know it all,
And still I speak of love. Look at me, brightest
And beautiful Lalage! turn here thine eyes!
Thou askest me if I could speak of love,
Knowing what I know, and seeing what I have seen.
Thou askest me that — and thus I answer thee,
Thus on my bended knee I answer thee. (*kneeling*)
Sweet Lalage, *I love thee — love thee — love thee;*
Through good and ill, through weal and woe, *I love thee.*
Not mother, with her first-born on her knee,
Thrills with intenser love than I for thee.
Not on God's altar, in any time or clime,
Burned there a holier fire than burneth now
Within my spirit for thee. And do I love? (*arising*)
Even for thy woes I love thee — even for thy woes —
Thy beauty, and thy woes.

LALAGE

Alas, proud Earl,
Thou dost forget thyself, remembering me!

POEMS

How, in thy father's halls, among the maidens
Pure and reproachless of thy princely line,
Could the dishonored Lalage abide,
Thy wife, and with a tainted memory? —
My seared and blighted name, how would it tally
With the ancestral honors of thy house,
And with thy glory?

POLITIAN

Speak not to me of glory!

I hate — I loathe the name; I do abhor
The unsatisfactory and ideal thing.
Art thou not Lalage and I Politian?
Do I not love — art thou not beautiful —
What need we more? Ha! glory! — now speak not
of it:

By all I hold most sacred and most solemn,
By all my wishes now, my fears hereafter,
By all I scorn on earth and hope in heaven,
There is no deed I would more glory in
Than in thy cause to scoff at this same glory
And trample it under foot. What matters it,
What matters it, my fairest and my best,
That we go down unhonored and forgotten
Into the dust — so we descend together?
Descend together — and then — and then, perchance —

LALAGE

Why dost thou pause, Politian?

POLITIAN

And then, perchance,
Arise together, Lalage, and roam
The starry and quiet dwellings of the blest,
And still —

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"

LALAGE

Why dost thou pause, Politian?

POLITIAN

And still *together* — *together*!

LALAGE

Now, Earl of Leicester,
Thou *lovest* me! and in my heart of hearts
I feel thou lovest me truly.

POLITIAN

Oh, Lalage! (*throwing himself upon his knee*)
And lovest thou *me*?

LALAGE

Hist! hush! within the gloom
Of yonder trees methought a figure passed —
A spectral figure, solemn, and slow, and noiseless,
Like the grim shadow Conscience, solemn and noiseless.
(walks across and returns)
I was mistaken — 't was but a giant bough
Stirred by the autumn wind. Politian!

POLITIAN

My Lalage — my love! why art thou moved?
Why dost thou turn so pale? Not Conscience' self,
Far less a shadow which thou likenest to it,
Should shake the firm spirit thus. But the night wind
Is chilly, and these melancholy boughs
Throw over all things a gloom.

LALAGE

Politian!

Thou speakest to me of love. Knowest thou the land
With which all tongues are busy, a land new found,

POEMS

Miraculously found by one of Genoa,
A thousand leagues within the golden west?
A fairy land of flowers and fruit and sunshine,
And crystal lakes, and over-arching forests,
And mountains, around whose towering summits the
winds
Of Heaven untrammelled flow — which air to breathe
Is happiness now, and will be freedom hereafter
In days that are to come?

POLITIAN

Oh, wilt thou, wilt thou
Fly to that Paradise, my Lalage — wilt thou
Fly thither with me? There care shall be forgotten,
And sorrow shall be no more, and Eros be all.
And life shall then be mine, for I will live
For thee, and in thine eyes; and thou shalt be
No more a mourner, but the radiant Joys
Shall wait upon thee, and the angel Hope
Attend thee ever; and I will kneel to thee
And worship thee, and call thee my beloved,
My own, my beautiful, my love, my wife,
My all; — oh, wilt thou — wilt thou, Lalage,
Fly thither with me?

LALAGE

A deed is to be done —
Castiglione lives!

POLITIAN

And he shall die! [exit.

LALAGE (*after a pause*)

“And — he — shall — die!” — alas!
Castiglione die? Who spoke the words?

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN "

Where am I? — what was it he said? — Politian!
Thou art not gone — thou art not gone, Politian!
I feel thou art not gone — yet dare not look,
Lest I behold thee not; thou couldst not go
With those words upon thy lips. Oh, speak to me!
And let me hear thy voice — one word, one word,
To say thou art not gone — one little sentence,
To say how thou dost scorn, how thou dost hate
My womanly weakness. Ha! ha! thou art not gone —
Oh, speak to me! I knew thou wouldst not go!
I knew thou wouldst not, couldst not, durst not go!
Villain, thou art not gone — thou mockest me!
And thus I clutch thee — thus! — He is gone, he is
gone —
Gone — gone! Where am I? — 't is well — 't is very
well!
So that the blade be keen, the blow be sure,
'T is well, 't is very well — alas! alas!

V

The suburbs. POLITIAN alone.

POLITIAN

This weakness grows upon me. I am faint,
And much, I fear me, ill — it will not do
To die ere I have lived! Stay, stay thy hand,
O Azrael, yet awhile! Prince of the Powers
Of darkness and the Tomb, oh, pity me!
Oh, pity me! let me not perish now,
In the budding of my Paradisal Hope!
Give me to live yet — yet a little while!
'T is I who pray for life, I who so late
Demanded but to die!

POEMS

Enter BALDAZZAR

What sayeth the Count?

(BALDAZZAR)

That knowing no cause of quarrel or of feud
Between the Earl Politian and himself,
He doth decline your cartel.

POLITIAN

What didst thou say?

What answer was it you brought me, good Baldazzar? —

With what excessive fragrance the zephyr comes
Laden from yonder bowers! a fairer day,
Or one more worthy Italy, methinks,
No mortal eyes have seen! — what said the Count?

BALDAZZAR

That he, Castiglione, not being aware
Of any feud existing, or any cause
Of quarrel, between your lordship and himself,
Cannot accept the challenge.

POLITIAN

It is most true —

All this is very true. — When saw you, sir,
When saw you now, Baldazzar, in the frigid
Ungenial Britain which we left so lately,
A heaven so calm as this, so utterly free
From the evil taint of clouds? — and he did say?

BALDAZZAR

No more, my lord, than I have told you, sir:
The Count Castiglione will not fight,
Having no cause for quarrel.

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"

POLITIAN

Now this is true —
All very true. Thou art my friend, Baldazzar,
And I have not forgotten it; thou 'lt do me
A piece of service? Wilt thou go back and say
Unto this man, that I, the Earl of Leicester,
Hold him a villain? thus much, I prythee, say
Unto the Count — it is exceeding just
He should have cause for quarrel.

BALDAZZAR

My lord! my friend! —

POLITIAN (*aside*)

'Tis he — he comes himself! (*aloud*) Thou reason-
est well.

I know what thou wouldst say — not send the mes-
sage —

Well! — I will think of it — I will not send it.
Now, prythee, leave me — hither doth come a person
With whom affairs of a most private nature
I would adjust.

BALDAZZAR

I go — to-morrow we meet —
Do we not? — at the Vatican —

POLITIAN

At the Vatican.
[*exit* BALDAZZAR.]

Enter CASTIGLIONE

CASTIGLIONE

The Earl of Leicester here!

POEMS

POLITIAN

I am the Earl of Leicester, and thou seest —
Dost thou not? — that I am here.

CASTIGLIONE

My lord, some strange,
Some singular mistake — misunderstanding —
Hath without doubt arisen; thou hast been urged
Thereby, in heat of anger, to address
Some words most unaccountable, in writing,
To me, Castiglione; the bearer being
Baldazzar, Duke of Surrey. I am aware
Of nothing which might warrant thee in this thing,
Having given thee no offence. Ha! — am I right?
'T was a mistake? — undoubtedly — we all
Do err at times.

POLITIAN

Draw, villain, and prate no more!

CASTIGLIONE

Ha! — draw? — and villain? have at thee then at once,
Proud Earl! (*draws*)

POLITIAN (*drawing*)

Thus to the expiatory tomb,
Untimely sepulchre, I do devote thee
In the name of Lalage!

CASTIGLIONE (*letting fall his sword and recoiling
to the extremity of the stage*)

Of Lalage!
Hold off thy sacred hand! — avaunt, I say!
Avaunt — I will not fight thee — indeed, I dare not.

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"

POLITIAN

Thou wilt not fight with me, didst say, Sir Count?
Shall I be baffled thus? — now this is well;
Didst say thou darest not? Ha!

CASTIGLIONE

I dare not — dare not —
Hold off thy hand — with that beloved name
So fresh upon thy lips I will not fight thee.
I cannot — dare not.

POLITIAN

Now by my halidom
I do believe thee! — coward, I do believe thee!

CASTIGLIONE

Ha! — coward! — this may not be!
(clutches his sword and staggers towards POLITIAN, but his purpose is changed before reaching him, and he falls upon his knee at the feet of the EARL)

Alas! my lord,
It is — it is — most true. In such a cause
I am the veriest coward. Oh, pity me!

POLITIAN (*greatly softened*)

Alas! — I do — indeed I pity thee.

CASTIGLIONE

And Lalage —

POLITIAN

Scoundrel! — arise and die!

CASTIGLIONE

It needeth not be; thus — thus — oh, let me die
Thus on my bended knee! It were most fitting

POEMS

That in this deep humiliation I perish;
For in the fight I will not raise a hand
Against thee, Earl of Leicester. Strike thou home —
(*baring his bosom*)

Here is no let or hindrance to thy weapon —
Strike home. I will not fight thee.

POLITIAN

Now, 's death and hell!

Am I not — am I not sorely — grievously tempted
To take thee at thy word? But mark me, sir:
Think not to fly me thus. Do thou prepare
For public insult in the streets before
The eyes of the citizens. I'll follow thee —
Like an avenging spirit I'll follow thee
Even unto death. Before those whom thou lovest,
Before all Rome I'll taunt thee, villain, — I'll taunt
thee,
Dost hear? with cowardice — thou wilt not fight me?
Thou liest! thou shalt! [*exit.*]

CASTIGLIONE

Now this, indeed, is just —
Most righteous, and most just — avenging Heaven!

III
INVOCATIONS

INVOCATIONS

TO HELEN

HELEN, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicæan barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs, have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy Land!

TO F——

BELOVED! amid the earnest woes
That crowd around my earthly path
(Drear path, alas! where grows
Not even one lonely rose),
My soul at least a solace hath
In dreams of thee, and therein knows
An Eden of bland repose.

And thus thy memory is to me
Like some enchanted far-off isle
In some tumultuous sea, —
Some ocean throbbing far and free
With storms, but where meanwhile
Serenest skies continually
Just o'er that one bright island smile.

TO ONE IN PARADISE

THOU wast all that to me, love,
For which my soul did pine:
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope, that didst arise
But to be overcast!
A voice from out the Future cries,
“On! on!” — but o’er the Past
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast.

For, alas! alas! with me
The light of Life is o’er!
No more — no more — no more —
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar.

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy gray eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams —
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams.

TO F——s S. O——d

THOU wouldst be loved? — then let thy heart
From its present pathway part not:
Being everything which now thou art,
Be nothing which thou art not.
So with the world thy gentle ways,
Thy grace, thy more than beauty,
Shall be an endless theme of praise,
And love — a simple duty.

A VALENTINE

FOR her this rhyme is penned, whose luminous eyes,
Brightly expressive as the twins of Leda,
Shall find her own sweet name, that nestling lies

Upon the page, enwrapped from every reader.
Search narrowly the lines! they hold a treasure
Divine, a talisman, an amulet
That must be worn at heart. Search well the measure —

The words — the syllables. Do not forget
The trivialest point, or you may lose your labor:
And yet there is in this no Gordian knot
Which one might not undo without a sabre,
If one could merely comprehend the plot.
Enwritten upon the leaf where now are peering
Eyes scintillating soul, there lie *perdus*
Three eloquent words oft uttered in the hearing
Of poets, by poets — as the name is a poet's, too.
Its letters, although naturally lying
Like the knight Pinto, Mendez Ferdinando,
Still form a synonym for Truth. — Cease trying!
You will not read the riddle, though you do the best
you can do.

AN ENIGMA

“**S**ELDOM we find,” says Solomon Don Dunce,
“Half an idea in the profoundest sonnet.
Through all the flimsy things we see at once
As easily as through a Naples bonnet —
Trash of all trash! how can a lady don it?
Yet heavier far than your Petrarchan stuff,
Owl-downy nonsense that the faintest puff
Twirls into trunk-paper the while you con it.”
And, veritably, Sol is right enough.
The general tuckermanities are arrant
Bubbles, ephemeral and *so* transparent;
But *this* is, now, you may depend upon it,
Stable, opaque, immortal — all by dint
Of the dear names that lie concealed within ’t.

TO HELEN

I SAW thee once — once only — years ago:
I must not say how many — but not many.
It was a July midnight; and from out
A full-orbed moon, that, like thine own soul, soaring
Sought a precipitate pathway up through heaven,
There fell a silvery-silken veil of light,
With quietude and sultriness and slumber,
Upon the upturned faces of a thousand
Roses that grew in an enchanted garden,
Where no wind dared to stir, unless on tiptoe:
Fell on the upturned faces of these roses
That gave out, in return for the love-light,
Their odorous souls in an ecstatic death:
Fell on the upturned faces of these roses
That smiled and died in this parterre, enchanted
By thee, and by the poetry of thy presence.

Clad all in white, upon a violet bank
I saw thee half reclining; while the moon
Fell on the upturned faces of the roses,
And on thine own, upturned — alas, in sorrow!

Was it not Fate, that, on this July midnight —
Was it not Fate (whose name is also Sorrow)
That bade me pause before that garden-gate
To breathe the incense of those slumbering roses?
No footstep stirred: the hated world all slept,
Save only thee and me — O Heaven! O God!
How my heart beats in coupling those two words! —

INVOCATIONS

Save only thee and me. I paused, I looked,
And in an instant all things disappeared.
(Ah, bear in mind this garden was enchanted!)
The pearly lustre of the moon went out:
The mossy banks and the meandering paths,
The happy flowers and the repining trees,
Were seen no more: the very roses' odors
Died in the arms of the adoring airs.
All, all expired save thee — save less than thou:
Save only the divine light in thine eyes,
Save but the soul in thine uplifted eyes:
I saw but them — they were the world to me:
I saw but them, saw only them for hours,
Saw only them until the moon went down.
What wild heart-histories seemed to lie enwritten
Upon those crystalline, celestial spheres;
How dark a woe, yet how sublime a hope;
How silently serene a sea of pride;
How daring an ambition; yet how deep,
How fathomless a capacity for love!

But now, at length, dear Dian sank from sight,
Into a western couch of thunder-cloud;
And thou, a ghost, amid the entombing trees
Didst glide away. Only thine eyes remained:
They would not go — they never yet have gone;
Lighting my lonely pathway home that night,
They have not left me (as my hopes have) since;
They follow me — they lead me through the years;
They are my ministers — yet I their slave;
Their office is to illumine and enkindle —
My duty, to be saved by their bright light,
And purified in their electric fire,
And sanctified in their elysian fire;

TO HELEN

They fill my soul with beauty (which is hope),
And are, far up in heaven, the stars I kneel to
In the sad, silent watches of my night;
While even in the meridian glare of day
I see them still — two sweetly scintillant
Venuses, unextinguished by the sun.

TO —

I HEED not that my earthly lot
Hath little of Earth in it,
That years of love have been forgot
In the hatred of a minute:
I mourn not that the desolate
Are happier, sweet, than I,
But that you sorrow for my fate
Who am a passer-by.

TO M. L. S—

OF all who hail thy presence as the morning;
Of all to whom thine absence is the night,
The blotting utterly from out high heaven
The sacred sun; of all who, weeping, bless thee
Hourly for hope, for life, ah! above all,
For the resurrection of deep-buried faith
In truth, in virtue, in humanity;
Of all who, on despair's unhallowed bed
Lying down to die, have suddenly arisen
At thy soft-murmured words, "Let there be light!"
At the soft-murmured words that were fulfilled
In the seraphic glancing of thine eyes;
Of all who owe thee most, whose gratitude
Nearest resembles worship, oh, remember
The truest, the most fervently devoted,
And think that these weak lines are written by him:
By him, who, as he pens them, thrills to think
His spirit is communing with an angel's.

TO ———

NOT long ago the writer of these lines,
In the mad pride of intellectuality,
Maintained "the power of words" — denied that ever
A thought arose within the human brain
Beyond the utterance of the human tongue:
And now, as if in mockery of that boast,
Two words, two foreign soft dissyllables,
Italian tones, made only to be murmured
By angels dreaming in the moonlit "dew
That hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill,"
Have stirred from out the abysses of his heart
Unthought-like thoughts, that are the souls of
thought, —

Richer, far wilder, far diviner visions
Than even the seraph harper, Israfael
(Who has "the sweetest voice of all God's creatures"),
Could hope to utter. And I — my spells are broken;
The pen falls powerless from my shivering hand;
With thy dear name as text, though bidden by thee,
I cannot write — I cannot speak or think —
Alas, I cannot feel; for 't is not feeling, —
This standing motionless upon the golden
Threshold of the wide-open gate of dreams,
Gazing entranced adown the gorgeous vista,
And thrilling as I see, upon the right,
Upon the left, and all the way along,
Amid empurpled vapors, far away
To where the prospect terminates — thee only.

FOR ANNIE

THANK Heaven! the crisis,
The danger, is past,
And the lingering illness
Is over at last,
And the fever called "Living"
Is conquered at last.

Sadly I know
I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move
As I lie at full length:
But no matter! — I feel
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly
Now, in my bed,
That any beholder
Might fancy me dead,
Might start at beholding me,
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,
The sighing and sobbing,
Are quieted now,
With that horrible throbbing
At heart: — ah, that horrible,
Horrible throbbing!

INVOCATIONS

The sickness, the nausea,
The pitiless pain,
Have ceased, with the fever
That maddened my brain,
With the fever called "Living"
That burned in my brain.

And oh! of all tortures,
That torture the worst
Has abated — the terrible
Torture of thirst
For the naphthaline river
Of Passion accurst:
I have drank of a water
That quenches all thirst:

Of a water that flows,
With a lullaby sound,
From a spring but a very few
Feet under ground,
From a cavern not very far
Down under ground.

And ah! let it never
Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy,
And narrow my bed;
For man never slept
In a different bed:
And, *to sleep*, you must slumber
In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit
Here blandly reposes,

FOR ANNIE

Forgetting, or never
 Regretting, its roses:
Its old agitations
 Of myrtles and roses;

For now, while so quietly
 Lying, it fancies
A holier odor
 About it, of pansies:
A rosemary odor,
 Commingled with pansies,
With rue and the beautiful
 Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,
 Bathing in many
A dream of the truth
 And the beauty of Annie,
Drowned in a bath
 Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,
 She fondly caressed,
And then I fell gently
 To sleep on her breast,
Deeply to sleep
 From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,
 She covered me warm,
And she prayed to the angels
 To keep me from harm,
To the queen of the angels
 To shield me from harm.

INVOCATIONS

And I lie so composedly
Now, in my bed,
(Knowing her love)
That you fancy me dead;
And I rest so contentedly
Now, in my bed,
(With her love at my breast)
That you fancy me dead,
That you shudder to look at me,
Thinking me dead.

But my heart it is brighter
Than all of the many
Stars in the sky,
For it sparkles with Annie:
It glows with the light
Of the love of my Annie,
With the thought of the light
Of the eyes of my Annie.

TO MY MOTHER

BECAUSE I feel that, in the Heavens above,
The angels, whispering to one another,
Can find among their burning terms of love
None so devotional as that of "Mother,"
Therefore by that dear name I long have called you —
You who are more than mother unto me,
And fill my heart of hearts, where Death installed you
In setting my Virginia's spirit free.
My mother, my own mother, who died early,
Was but the mother of myself; but you
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,
And thus are dearer than the mother I knew
By that infinity with which my wife
Was dearer to my soul than its soul-life.

IV

EARLY POEMS

NOTE: 1845

PRIVATE reasons — some of which have reference to the sin of plagiarism, and others to the date of Tennyson's first poems — have induced me, after some hesitation, to republish these, the crude compositions of my earliest boyhood. They are printed verbatim — without alteration from the original edition — the date of which is too remote to be judiciously acknowledged.

E. A. P.

TAMERLANE

KIND solace in a dying hour!
Such, father, is not (now) my theme;
I will not madly deem that power
Of Earth may shrive me of the sin
Unearthly pride hath revelled in;
I have no time to dote or dream.
You call it hope — that fire of fire!
It is but agony of desire;
If I *can* hope — O God! I can —
Its fount is holier, more divine;
I would not call thee fool, old man,
But such is not a gift of thine.

Know thou the secret of a spirit
Bowed from its wild pride into shame.
O yearning heart, I did inherit
Thy withering portion with the fame,
The searing glory which hath shone
Amid the jewels of my throne —
Halo of Hell — and with a pain
Not Hell shall make me fear again,
O craving heart, for the lost flowers
And sunshine of my summer hours!
The undying voice of that dead time,
With its interminable chime,
Rings, in the spirit of a spell,
Upon thy emptiness — a knell.

EARLY POEMS

I have not always been as now:
The fevered diadem on my brow
 I claimed and won usurpingly.
Hath not the same fierce heirdom given
 Rome to the Cæsar, this to me? —
 The heritage of a kingly mind,
And a proud spirit which hath striven
 Triumphantly with human kind.

On mountain soil I first drew life:
 The mists of the Taglay have shed
 Nightly their dews upon my head;
And, I believe, the wingèd strife
 And tumult of the headlong air
 Have nestled in my very hair.

So late from Heaven — that dew — it fell
 ('Mid dreams of an unholy night)
Upon me with the touch of Hell,
 While the red flashing of the light
From clouds that hung, like banners, o'er,
 Appeared to my half-closing eye
 The pageantry of monarchy,
'And the deep trumpet-thunder's roar
 Came hurriedly upon me, telling
 Of human battle, where my voice,
My own voice, silly child! was swelling
 (Oh, how my spirit would rejoice,
 And leap within me at the cry)
 The battle-cry of Victory!

The rain came down upon my head
 Unsheltered, and the heavy wind
 Rendered me mad and deaf and blind:
It was but man, I thought, who shed

TAMERLANE

Laurels upon me: and the rush,
The torrent of the chilly air,
Gurgled within my ear the crush
Of empires — with the captive's prayer,
The hum of suitors, and the tone
Of flattery 'round a sovereign's throne.

My passions, from that hapless hour,
Usurped a tyranny which men
Have deemed, since I have reached to power,
My innate nature — be it so:
But, father, there lived one who, then,
Then, in my boyhood, when their fire
Burned with a still intenser glow
(For passion must, with youth, expire)
E'en *then* who knew this iron heart
In woman's weakness had a part.

I have no words — alas! — to tell
The loveliness of loving well.
Nor would I now attempt to trace
The more than beauty of a face
Whose lineaments, upon my mind,
Are — shadows on the unstable wind:
Thus I remember having dwelt
Some page of early lore upon,
With loitering eye, till I have felt
The letters, with their meaning, melt
To fantasies with none.

Oh, she was worthy of all love!
Love, as in infancy, was mine:
'T was such as angel minds above
Might envy; her young heart the shrine
On which my every hope and thought

EARLY POEMS

Were incense, then a goodly gift,
For they were childish and upright,
Pure as her young example taught:
Why did I leave it, and, adrift,
Trust to the fire within, for light?

We grew in age and love together,
Roaming the forest and the wild;
My breast her shield in wintry weather;
And when the friendly sunshine smiled,
And she would mark the opening skies,
I saw no Heaven but in her eyes.
Young Love's first lesson is the heart:
For 'mid that sunshine and those smiles,
When, from our little cares apart,
And laughing at her girlish wiles,
I'd throw me on her throbbing breast
And pour my spirit out in tears,
There was no need to speak the rest,
No need to quiet any fears
Of her — who asked no reason why,
But turned on me her quiet eye.

Yet more than worthy of the love
My spirit struggled with, and strove,
When on the mountain peak alone
Ambition lent it a new tone, —
I had no being but in thee:
The world, and all it did contain
In the earth, the air, the sea, —
Its joy, its little lot of pain
That was new pleasure, the ideal
Dim vanities of dreams by night,
And dimmer nothings which were real

TAMERLANE

(Shadows, and a more shadowy light),
Parted upon their misty wings,
And so confusedly became
Thine image, and a name, a name, —
Two separate yet most intimate things.

I was ambitious — have you known
The passion, father? You have not.
A cottager, I marked a throne
Of half the world as all my own,
And murmured at such lowly lot;
But, just like any other dream,
Upon the vapor of the dew
My own had passed, did not the beam
Of beauty which did while it through
The minute, the hour, the day, oppress
My mind with double loveliness.

We walked together on the crown
Of a high mountain which looked down,
Afar from its proud natural towers
Of rock and forest, on the hills —
The dwindled hills! begirt with bowers
And shouting with a thousand rills.
I spoke to her of power and pride,
But mystically, in such guise
That she might deem it nought beside
The moment's converse; in her eyes
I read, perhaps too carelessly,
A mingled feeling with my own;
The flush on her bright cheek to me
Seemed to become a queenly throne
Too well that I should let it be
Light in the wilderness alone.

EARLY POEMS

I wrapped myself in grandeur then
And donned a visionary crown;
Yet it was not that Fantasy
Had thrown her mantle over me;
But that, among the rabble — men,
Lion ambition is chained down
And crouches to a keeper's hand:
Not so in deserts where the grand,
The wild, the terrible, conspire
With their own breath to fan his fire.

Look 'round thee now on Samarcand!
Is she not queen of Earth? her pride
Above all cities? in her hand
Their destinies? in all beside
Of glory which the world hath known,
Stands she not nobly and alone?
Falling, her veriest stepping-stone
Shall form the pedestal of a throne!
And who her sovereign? Timour — he
Whom the astonished people saw
Striding o'er empires haughtily
A diademed outlaw!

O human love, thou spirit given,
On Earth, of all we hope in Heaven!
Which fall'st into the soul like rain
Upon the Siroc-withered plain,
And, failing in thy power to bless,
But leav'st the heart a wilderness!
Idea! which bindest life around
With music of so strange a sound
And beauty of so wild a birth —
Farewell! for I have won the Earth.

TAMERLANE

When Hope, the eagle that towered, could see
No cliff beyond him in the sky,
His pinions were bent droopingly,
And homeward turned his softened eye.
'T was sunset: when the sun will part,
There comes a sullenness of heart
To him who still would look upon
The glory of the summer sun.
That soul will hate the evening mist
So often lovely, and will list
To the sound of the coming darkness (known
To those whose spirits hearken) as one
Who, in a dream of night, *would* fly,
But *cannot*, from a danger nigh.

What though the moon — the white moon
Shed all the splendor of her noon?
Her smile is chilly, and her beam,
In that time of dreariness, will seem
(So like you gather in your breath)
A portrait taken after death.
And boyhood is a summer sun
Whose waning is the dreariest one;
For all we live to know is known,
And all we seek to keep hath flown.
Let life, then, as the day-flower, fall
With the noonday beauty — which is all!

I reached my home, my home no more,
For all had flown who made it so.
I passed from out its mossy door,
And, though my tread was soft and low,
A voice came from the threshold stone
Of one whom I had earlier known:

EARLY POEMS

Oh, I defy thee, Hell, to show,
On beds of fire that burn below,
An humbler heart — a deeper woe.

Father, I firmly do believe —
I *know*, for Death, who comes for me
From regions of the blest afar
Where there is nothing to deceive,
Hath left his iron gate ajar,
And rays of truth you cannot see
Are flashing through Eternity —
I do believe that Eblis hath
A snare in every human path;
Else how, when in the holy grove
I wandered of the idol, Love,
Who daily scents his snowy wings
With incense of burnt offerings
From the most unpolluted things,
Whose pleasant bowers are yet so riven
Above with trellised rays from Heaven
No mote may shun, no tiniest fly,
The lightning of his eagle eye, —
How was it that Ambition crept,
Unseen, amid the revels there,
Till, growing bold, he laughed and leapt
In the tangles of Love's very hair?

TO SCIENCE

A PROLOGUE TO "AL AARAAF"

SCIENCE! true daughter of Old Time thou art,
Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes.
Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,
Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?
How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise,
Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering
To seek for treasure in the jewelled skies,
Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing?
Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car,
And driven the Hamadryad from the wood
To seek a shelter in some happier star?
Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,
The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
The summer dream beneath the tamarind-tree?

AL AARAAF

PART I

O H! nothing earthly save the ray
(Thrown back from flowers) of Beauty's eye,
As in those gardens where the day
Springs from the gems of Circassy:
Oh! nothing earthly save the thrill
Of melody in woodland rill,
Or (music of the passion-hearted)
Joy's voice so peacefully departed
That, like the murmur in the shell,
Its echo dwelleth and will dwell:
Oh! nothing of the dross of ours,
Yet all the beauty, all the flowers
That list our love, and deck our bowers,
Adorn yon world afar, afar
The wandering star.

'T was a sweet time for Nesace: for there
Her world lay lolling on the golden air,
Near four bright suns, a temporary rest,
An oasis in desert of the blest.
Away — away — 'mid seas of rays that roll
Empyrean splendor o'er the unchained soul, —
The soul that scarce (the billows are so dense)
Can struggle to its destined eminence; —
To distant spheres, from time to time, she rode,
And late to ours, the favored one of God;
But, now, the ruler of an anchored realm,

AL AARAAF

She throws aside the sceptre, leaves the helm,
And, amid incense and high spiritual hymns,
Laves in quadruple light her angel limbs.

Now happiest, loveliest in yon lovely Earth,
Whence sprang the "Idea of Beauty" into birth
(Falling in wreaths through many a startled star,
Like woman's hair 'mid pearls, until, afar,
It lit on hills Achaian, and there dwelt),
She looked into Infinity, and knelt.
Rich clouds, for canopies, about her curled,
Fit emblems of the model of her world,
Seen but in beauty, not impeding sight
Of other beauty glittering through the light, —
A wreath that twined each starry form around,
And all the opaled air in color bound.

All hurriedly she knelt upon a bed
Of flowers: of lilies such as reared the head
On the fair Capo Deucato, and sprang
So eagerly around about to hang
Upon the flying footsteps of — deep pride —
Of her who loved a mortal, and so died;
The Sephalica, budding with young bees,
Upreared its purple stem around her knees, —
And gemmy flower, of Trebizond misnamed,
Inmate of highest stars where erst it shamed
All other loveliness; — its honeyed dew
(The fabled nectar that the heathen knew),
Deliriously sweet, was dropped from Heaven,
And fell on gardens of the unforgiven
In Trebizond, and on a sunny flower
So like its own above that, to this hour,
It still remaineth, torturing the bee

EARLY POEMS

With madness and unwonted revery;
In Heaven, and all its environs, the leaf
And blossom of the fairy plant in grief
Disconsolate linger, — grief that hangs her head,
Repenting follies that full long have fled,
Heaving her white breast to the balmy air,
Like guilty beauty, chastened, and more fair: —
Nyctanthes too, as sacred as the light
She fears to perfume, perfuming the night;
And Clytia, pondering between many a sun,
While pettish tears adown her petals run;
And that aspiring flower that sprang on Earth,
And died ere scarce exalted into birth,
Bursting its odorous heart in spirit to wing
Its way to Heaven from garden of a king;
And Valisnerian lotus, thither flown
From struggling with the waters of the Rhone;
And thy most lovely purple perfume, Zante, —
Isola d'oro, fior di Levante!
And the Nelumbo bud that floats forever
With Indian Cupid down the holy river: —
Fair flowers, and fairy! to whose care is given
To bear the Goddess' song, in odors, up to Heaven:

“Spirit, that dwellest where,
In the deep sky,
The terrible and fair
In beauty vie!
Beyond the line of blue,
The boundary of the star
Which turneth at the view
Of thy barrier and thy bar, —
Of the barrier overgone
By the comets who were cast

AL AARAAF

From their pride, and from their throne,
To be drudges till the last, —
To be carriers of fire
 (The red fire of their heart)
With speed that may not tire,
 And with pain that shall not part, —
Who livest — *that* we know —
 In Eternity — we feel —
But the shadow of whose brow
 What spirit shall reveal?
Though the beings whom thy Nesace,
 Thy messenger, hath known,
Have dreamed for thy Infinity
 A model of their own,
Thy will is done, O God!
 The star hath ridden high
Through many a tempest, but she rode
 Beneath thy burning eye;
And here, in thought, to thee —
 In thought that can alone
Ascend thy empire and so be
 A partner of thy throne —
By wingèd Fantasy
 My embassy is given,
Till secrecy shall knowledge be
 In the environs of Heaven.”

She ceased — and buried then her burning cheek,
Abashed, amid the lilies there to seek
A shelter from the fervor of His eye;
For the stars trembled at the Deity.
She stirred not — breathed not — for a voice was
 there,
How solemnly pervading the calm air!

EARLY POEMS

A sound of silence on the startled ear,
Which dreamy poets name "the music of the sphere!"
Ours is a world of words: Quiet we call
"Silence" — which is the merest word of all.
All Nature speaks, and even ideal things
Flap shadowy sounds from visionary wings;
But ah! not so when thus in realms on high
The eternal voice of God is passing by,
And the red winds are withering in the sky:—

"What though in worlds which sightless cycles run,
Linked to a little system, and one sun, —
Where all my love is folly, and the crowd
Still think my terrors but the thunder-cloud,
The storm, the earthquake, and the ocean-wrath, —
(Ah! will they cross me in my angrier path?)
What though in worlds which own a single sun
The sands of Time grow dimmer as they run,
Yet thine is my resplendency, so given
To bear my secrets through the upper Heaven
Leave tenantless thy crystal home, and fly,
With all thy train, athwart the moony sky,
Apart — like fireflies in Sicilian night,
And wing to other worlds another light!
Divulge the secrets of thy embassy
To the proud orbs that twinkle, and so be
To every heart a barrier and a ban
Lest the stars totter in the guilt of man!"

Up rose the maiden in the yellow night,
The single-moonèd eve! On Earth we plight
Our faith to one love, and one moon adore:
The birthplace of young Beauty had no more.
As sprang that yellow star from downy hours,
Up rose the maiden from her shrine of flowers,

AL AARAAF

And bent o'er sheeny mountain and dim plain
Her way, but left not yet her Therasæan reign.

PART II

HIGH on a mountain of enamelled head, —
Such as the drowsy shepherd on his bed
Of giant pasturage lying at his ease,
Raising his heavy eyelid, starts and sees
With many a muttered "hope to be forgiven,"
What time the moon is quadrated in Heaven, —
Of rosy head that, towering far away
Into the sun-lit ether, caught the ray
Of sunken suns at eve, at noon of night,
While the moon danced with the fair stranger light; —
Upreared upon such height arose a pile
Of gorgeous columns on the unburdened air,
Flashing from Parian marble that twin smile
Far down upon the wave that sparkled there,
And nursled the young mountain in its lair.
Of molten stars their pavement, such as fall
Through the ebon air, besilvering the pall
Of their own dissolution, while they die, —
Adorning then the dwellings of the sky.
A dome, by linkèd light from Heaven let down,
Sat gently on these columns as a crown;
A window of one circular diamond, there,
Looked out above into the purple air,
And rays from God shot down that meteor chain
And hallowed all the beauty twice again,
Save when, between the empyrean and that ring,
Some eager spirit flapped his dusky wing.
But on the pillars seraph eyes have seen

EARLY POEMS

The dimness of this world; that grayish green
That Nature loves the best for Beauty's grave
Lurked in each cornice, round each architrave;
And every sculptured cherub thereabout
That from his marble dwelling peerèd out,
Seemed earthly in the shadow of his niche, —
Achaian statues in a world so rich!
Friezes from Tadmor and Persepolis,
From Balbec, and the stilly, clear abyss
Of beautiful Gomorrah! Oh, the wave
Is now upon thee — but too late to save!

Sound loves to revel in a summer night:
Witness the murmur of the gray twilight
That stole upon the ear, in Eyraco,
Of many a wild star-gazer long ago;
That stealeth ever on the ear of him
Who, musing, gazeth on the distance dim,
And sees the darkness coming as a cloud;
Is not its form — its voice — most palpable and loud?

But what is this? — it cometh, and it brings
A music with it — 't is the rush of wings:
A pause — and then a sweeping, falling strain,
And Nesace is in her halls again.

From the wild energy of wanton haste

Her cheeks were flushing, and her lips apart;
And zone that clung around her gentle waist

Had burst beneath the heaving of her heart.
Within the centre of that hall to breathe
She paused and panted, Zante! all beneath
The fairy light that kissed her golden hair,
And longed to rest, yet could but sparkle there.

Young flowers were whispering in melody
To happy flowers that night, and tree to tree;

AL AARAAF

Fountains were gushing music as they fell
In many a star-lit grove, or moon-lit dell;
Yet silence came upon material things,
Fair flowers, bright waterfalls and angel wings,
And sound alone, that from the spirit sprang,
Bore burden to the charm the maiden sang:

“’Neath blue-bell or streamer,
Or tufted wild spray
That keeps from the dreamer
The moonbeam away,
Bright beings! that ponder,
With half closing eyes,
On the stars which your wonder
Hath drawn from the skies,
Till they glance through the shade, and
Come down to your brow
Like — eyes of the maiden
Who calls on you now, —
Arise from your dreaming
In violet bowers
To duty beseeching
These star-litten hours!
And shake from your tresses
Encumbered with dew
The breath of those kisses
That cumber them too —
Oh, how, without you, Love!
Could angels be blest? —
Those kisses of true love
That lulled ye to rest!
Up! shake from your wing
Each hindering thing!
The dew of the night,
It would weigh down your flight;

EARLY POEMS

And true love caresses,
They are light on the tresses,
But lead on the heart.

“Ligeia! Ligeia!
Oh, leave them apart —
My beautiful one!
Whose harshest idea
Will to melody run,
Oh, is it thy will
On the breezes to toss?
Or, capriciously still,
Like the lone albatross,
Incumbent on night
(As she on the air)
To keep watch with delight
On the harmony there?

“Ligeia! wherever
Thy image may be,
No magic shall sever
Thy music from thee.
Thou hast bound many eyes
In a dreamy sleep,
But the strains still arise
Which thy vigilance keep:
The sound of the rain,
Which leaps down to the flower
And dances again
In the rhythm of the shower,
The murmur that springs
From the growing of grass,
Are the music of things,
But are modelled, alas!
Away, then, my dearest,

AL AARAAF

Oh, hie thee away
To springs that lie clearest
Beneath the moon-ray, —
To lone lake that smiles,
In its dream of deep rest,
At the many star-isles
That enjewel its breast!
Where wild flowers, creeping,
Have mingled their shade,
On its margin is sleeping
Full many a maid;
Some have left the cool glade, and
Have slept with the bee;
Arouse them, my maiden,
On moorland and lea!
Go! breathe on their slumber,
All softly in ear,
The musical number
They slumbered to hear:
For what can awaken
An angel so soon,
Whose sleep hath been taken
Beneath the cold moon,
As the spell which no slumber
Of witchery may test, —
The rhythmical number
Which lulled him to rest?

Spirits in wing, and angels to the view,
A thousand seraphs burst the empyrean through, —
Young dreams still hovering on their drowsy flight,
Seraphs in all but "Knowledge," the keen light
That fell, refracted, through thy bounds afar,
O Death, from eye of God upon that star:
Sweet was that error, sweeter still that death;

EARLY POEMS

Sweet was that error — even with *us* the breath
Of Science dims the mirror of our joy, —
To them 't were the Simoom, and would destroy.
For what (to them) availeth it to know
That Truth is Falsehood, or that Bliss is Woe?
Sweet was their death — with them to die was rife
With the last ecstasy of satiate life;
Beyond that death no immortality,
But sleep that pondereth and is not “to be;”
And there, oh, may my weary spirit dwell,
Apart from Heaven's Eternity — and yet how far from
Hell!

What guilty spirit, in what shrubby dim,
Heard not the stirring summons of that hymn?
But two; they fell; for Heaven no grace imparts
To those who hear not for their beating hearts;
A maiden-angel and her seraph-lover.
Oh, where (and ye may seek the wide skies over)
Was Love, the blind, near sober Duty known?
Unguided Love hath fallen 'mid “tears of perfect
moan.”

He was a goodly spirit — he who fell:
A wanderer by mossy-mantled well,
A gazer on the lights that shine above,
A dreamer in the moonbeam by his love.
What wonder? for each star is eye-like there,
And looks so sweetly down on Beauty's hair;
And they, and every mossy spring were holy
To his love-haunted heart and melancholy.
The night had found (to him a night of woe)
Upon a mountain crag young Angelo;
Beetling it bends athwart the solemn sky,
And scowls on starry worlds that down beneath it lie.

AL AARAAF

Here sate he with his love, his dark eye bent
With eagle gaze along the firmament;
Now turned it upon her, but ever then
It trembled to the orb of EARTH again.

“Ianthe, dearest, see, how dim that ray!
How lovely 't is to look so far away!
She seemed not thus upon that autumn eve
I left her gorgeous halls, nor mourned to leave.
That eve, that eve, I should remember well,
The sun-ray dropped in Lemnos with a spell
On the arabesque carving of a gilded hall
Wherein I sate, and on the draperied wall,
And on my eyelids. Oh, the heavy light,
How drowsily it weighed them into night!
On flowers before, and mist, and love, they ran
With Persian Saadi in his Gulistan.
But oh, that light! I slumbered; Death, the while,
Stole o'er my senses in that lovely isle
So softly that no single silken hair
Awoke that slept, or knew that he was there.

“The last spot of Earth's orb I trod upon
Was a proud temple called the Parthenon;
More beauty clung around her columned wall
Than even thy glowing bosom beats withal;
And when old Time my wing did disenthral,
Thence sprang I as the eagle from his tower,
And years I left behind me in an hour.
What time upon her airy bounds I hung,
One half the garden of her globe was flung,
Unrolling as a chart unto my view;
Tenantless cities of the desert too!
Ianthe, beauty crowded on me then,
And half I wished to be again of men.”

EARLY POEMS

“My Angelo! and why of them to be?
A brighter dwelling-place is here for thee,
And greener fields than in yon world above,
And woman’s loveliness, and passionate love.”

“But list, Ianthe! when the air so soft
Failed as my pennoned spirit leapt aloft,
Perhaps my brain grew dizzy — but the world
I left so late was into chaos hurled,
Sprang from her station, on the winds apart,
And rolled, a flame, the fiery Heaven athwart.
Methought, my sweet one, then I ceased to soar,
And fell — not swiftly as I rose before,
But with a downward, tremulous motion, through
Light, brazen rays, this golden star unto;
Nor long the measure of my falling hours,
For nearest of all stars was thine to ours;
Dread star! that came, amid a night of mirth,
A red Dædalion on the timid Earth.”

“We came, and to thy Earth — but not to us
Be given our lady’s bidding to discuss:
We came, my love; around, above, below,
Gay firefly of the night, we come and go,
Nor ask a reason save the angel-nod
She grants to us, as granted by her God.
But, Angelo, than thine gray Time unfurled
Never his fairy wing o’er fairier world!
Dim was its little disk, and angel eyes
Alone could see the phantom in the skies,
When first Al Aaraaf knew her course to be
Headlong thitherward o’er the starry sea;
But when its glory swelled upon the sky,
As glowing Beauty’s bust beneath man’s eye,

AL AARAAF

We paused before the heritage of men,
And thy star trembled — as doth Beauty then!”

Thus, in discourse, the lovers whiled away
The night that waned, and waned, and brought no day.
They fell: for Heaven to them no hope imparts
Who hear not for the beating of their hearts.

“THE HAPPIEST DAY, THE HAPPIEST
HOUR ”

THE happiest day, the happiest hour
My seared and blighted heart hath known,
The highest hope of pride and power,
I feel hath flown.

Of power, said I? yes! such I ween;
But they have vanished long, alas!
The visions of my youth have been —
But let them pass.

And, pride, what have I now with thee?
Another brow may even inherit
The venom thou hast poured on me —
Be still, my spirit!

The happiest day, the happiest hour
Mine eyes shall see — have ever seen,
The brightest glance of pride and power,
I feel — have been.

But were that hope of pride and power
Now offered, with the pain
Even *then* I felt, — that brightest hour
I would not live again.

For on its wing was dark alloy,
And, as it fluttered, fell
An essence, powerful to destroy
A soul that knew it well.

STANZAS

How often we forget all time, when lone
Admiring Nature's universal throne;
Her woods — her wilds — her mountains — the intense
Reply of HERS to OUR intelligence!

BYRON: *The Island.*

1

N youth have I known one with whom the Earth,
In secret, communing held, as he with it,
In daylight, and in beauty from his birth;
Whose fervid, flickering torch of life was lit
From the sun and stars, whence he had drawn forth
A passionate light — such for his spirit was fit —
And yet that spirit knew not, in the hour
Of its own fervor, what had o'er it power.

2

Perhaps it may be that my mind is wrought
To a fever by the moonbeam that hangs o'er;
But I will half believe that wild light fraught
With more of sovereignty than ancient lore
Hath ever told; or is it of a thought
The unembodied essence, and no more,
That with a quickening spell doth o'er us pass
As dew of the night-time o'er the summer grass?

EARLY POEMS

3

Doth o'er us pass, when, as the expanding eye
To the loved object, so the tear to the lid
Will start, which lately slept in apathy?
And yet it need not be — that object — hid
From us in life, but common — which doth lie
Each hour before us — but *then* only bid
With a strange sound, as of a harp-string broken,
To awake us. 'T is a symbol and a token

4

Of what in other worlds shall be, and given
In beauty by our God to those alone
Who otherwise would fall from life and Heaven,
Drawn by their heart's passion, and that tone,
That high tone of the spirit, which hath striven,
Though not with Faith, with godliness, — whose throne
With desperate energy 't hath beaten down;
Wearing its own deep feeling as a crown.

EVENING STAR

'T WAS noontide of summer,
And stars, in their orbits,
Shone pale, through the light
Of the brighter, cold moon,
'Mid planets her slaves,
Herself in the Heavens,
Her beam on the waves.
I gazed awhile
On her cold smile,
Too cold — too cold for me;
There passed, as a shroud,
A fleecy cloud,
And I turned away to thee,
Proud Evening Star,
In thy glory afar,
And dearer thy beam shall be;
For joy to my heart
Is the proud part
Thou bearest in Heaven at night,
And more I admire
Thy distant fire
Than that colder, lowly light.

DREAMS

O H, that my young life were a lasting dream!
My spirit not awakening, till the beam
Of an Eternity should bring the morrow!
Yes! though that long dream were of hopeless
sorrow,

'T were better than the cold reality
Of waking life to him whose heart must be,
And hath been still, upon the lovely earth,
A chaos of deep passion, from his birth.
But should it be — that dream eternally
Continuing — as dreams have been to me
In my young boyhood, — should it thus be given,
'T were folly still to hope for higher Heaven.
For I have revelled, when the sun was bright
In the summer sky, in dreams of living light
And loveliness, — have left my very heart
In climes of mine imagining, apart
From mine own home, with beings that have been
Of mine own thought — what more could I have seen?
'T was once — and only once — and the wild hour
From my remembrance shall not pass — some power
Or spell had bound me; 't was the chilly wind
Came o'er me in the night, and left behind
Its image on my spirit, or the moon
Shone on my slumbers in her lofty noon
Too coldly, or the stars, — howe'er it was,
That dream was as that night-wind — let it pass.

I have been happy, though in a dream.
I have been happy — and I love the theme —

DREAMS

Dreams! in their vivid coloring of life,
As in that fleeting, shadowy, misty strife
Of semblance with reality, which brings
To the delirious eye more lovely things
Of Paradise and Love — and all our own —
Than young Hope in his sunniest hour hath known.

THE LAKE: TO —

IN spring of youth it was my lot
To haunt of the wide world a spot
The which I could not love the less,
So lovely was the loneliness
Of a wild lake, with black rock bound,
And the tall pines that towered around.

But when the Night had thrown her pall
Upon that spot, as upon all,
And the mystic wind went by
Murmuring in melody,
Then — ah, then — I would awake
To the terror of the lone lake.
Yet that terror was not fright,
But a tremulous delight:
A feeling not the jewelled mine
Could teach or bribe me to define,
Nor love — although the love were thine.

Death was in that poisonous wave,
And in its gulf a fitting grave
For him who thence could solace bring
To his lone imagining,
Whose solitary soul could make
An Eden of that dim lake.

SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

THY soul shall find itself alone
'Mid dark thoughts of the gray tombstone;
Not one, of all the crowd, to pry
Into thine hour of secrecy.

Be silent in that solitude,
Which is not loneliness — for then
The spirits of the dead, who stood
In life before thee, are again
In death around thee, and their will
Shall overshadow thee; be still.

The night, though clear, shall frown,
And the stars shall look not down
From their high thrones in the Heaven
With light like hope to mortals given,
But their red orbs, without beam,
To thy weariness shall seem
As a burning and a fever
Which would cling to thee forever.

Now are thoughts thou shalt not banish,
Now are visions ne'er to vanish;
From thy spirit shall they pass
No more, like dewdrops from the grass.

The breeze, the breath of God, is still,
And the mist upon the hill

EARLY POEMS

Shadowy, shadowy, yet unbroken,
Is a symbol and a token.
How it hangs upon the trees,
A mystery of mysteries!

A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM

TAKE this kiss upon the brow!
And, in parting from you now,
Thus much let me avow:
You are not wrong who deem
That my days have been a dream;
Yet if hope has flown away
In a night, or in a day,
In a vision, or in none,
Is it therefore the less gone?
All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar
Of a surf-tormented shore,
And I hold within my hand
Grains of the golden sand —
How few! yet how they creep
Through my fingers to the deep,
While I weep — while I weep!
O God! can I not grasp
Them with a tighter clasp?
O God! can I not save
One from the pitiless wave?
Is *all* that we see or seem
But a dream within a dream?

SONG

I SAW thee on thy bridal day,
When a burning blush came o'er thee,
Though happiness around thee lay,
The world all love before thee;

And in thine eye a kindling light
(Whatever it might be)
Was all on Earth my aching sight
Of loveliness could see.

That blush, perhaps, was maiden shame:
As such it well may pass,
Though its glow hath raised a fiercer flame
In the breast of him, alas!

Who saw thee on that bridal day,
When that deep blush *would* come o'er thee,
Though happiness around thee lay,
The world all love before thee.

TO THE RIVER —

FAIR river! in thy bright, clear flow
Of crystal, wandering water,
Thou art an emblem of the glow
Of beauty — the unhidden heart,
The playful mazziness of art,
In old Alberto's daughter;

But when within thy wave she looks,
Which glistens then, and trembles,
Why, then, the prettiest of brooks
Her worshipper resembles;
For in his heart, as in thy stream,
Her image deeply lies —
His heart which trembles at the beam
Of her soul-searching eyes.

TO —

THE bowers whereat, in dreams, I see
The wantonest singing birds,
Are lips — and all thy melody
Of lip-begotten words;

Thine eyes, in Heaven of heart enshrined,
Then desolately fall,
O God! on my funereal mind
Like starlight on a pall;

Thy heart — *thy* heart! — I wake and sigh,
And sleep to dream till day
Of the truth that gold can never buy
Of the bawbles that it may.

A DREAM

IN visions of the dark night
I have dreamed of joy departed,
But a waking dream of life and light
Hath left me broken-hearted.

Ah! what is not a dream by day
To him whose eyes are cast
On things around him with a ray
Turned back upon the past?

That holy dream, that holy dream,
While all the world were chiding,
Hath cheered me as a lovely beam
A lonely spirit guiding.

What though that light, through storm and night,
So trembled from afar,
What could there be more purely bright
In Truth's day-star?

ROMANCE

ROMANCE, who loves to nod and sing
With drowsy head and folded wing
Among the green leaves as they shake
Far down within some shadowy lake,
To me a painted paroquet
Hath been — a most familiar bird —
Taught me my alphabet to say,
To lisp my very earliest word
While in the wild-wood I did lie,
A child — with a most knowing eye.

Of late, eternal condor years
So shake the very heaven on high
With tumult as they thunder by,
I have no time for idle cares
Through gazing on the unquiet sky;
And when an hour with calmer wings
Its down upon my spirit flings,
That little time with lyre and rhyme
To while away — forbidden things —
My heart would feel to be a crime
Unless it trembled with the strings.

FAIRY-LAND

DIM vales, and shadowy floods,
And cloudy-looking woods,
Whose forms we can't discover
For the tears that drip all over!
Huge moons there wax and wane,
Again — again — again,
Every moment of the night,
Forever changing places,
And they put out the starlight
With the breath from their pale faces.
About twelve by the moon-dial,
One, more filmy than the rest
(A kind which, upon trial,
They have found to be the best),
Comes down — still down — and down,
With its centre on the crown
Of a mountain's eminence,
While its wide circumference
In easy drapery falls
Over hamlets, over halls,
Wherever they may be;
O'er the strange woods, o'er the sea,
Over spirits on the wing,
Over every drowsy thing,
And buries them up quite
In a labyrinth of light;
And then, how deep, oh, deep,
Is the passion of their sleep!

EARLY POEMS

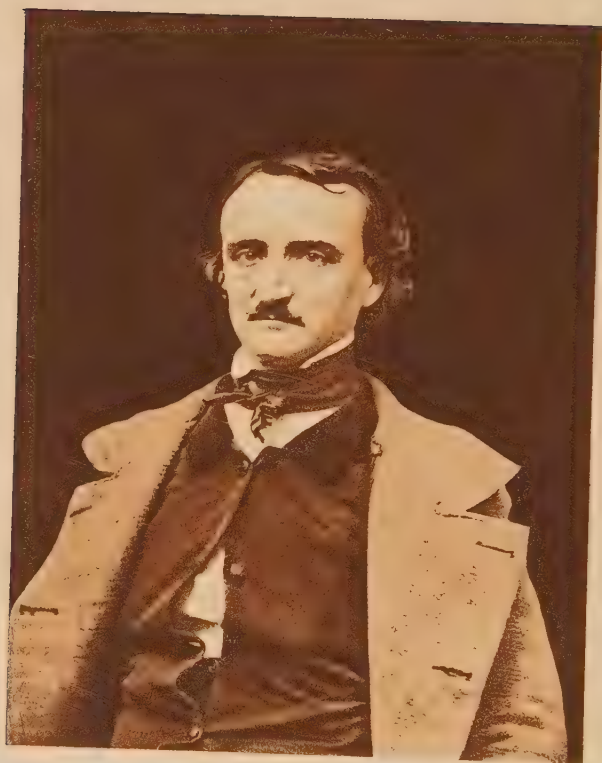
In the morning they arise,
And their moony covering
Is soaring in the skies
With the tempests as they toss,
Like — almost anything —
Or a yellow albatross.
They use that moon no more
For the same end as before,
Videlicet, a tent, —
Which I think extravagant.
Its atomies, however,
Into a shower dissever,
Of which those butterflies
Of Earth, who seek the skies,
And so come down again
(Never-contented things!),
Have brought a specimen
Upon their quivering wings.

ALONE

FROM childhood's hour I have not been
As others were; I have not seen
As others saw; I could not bring
My passions from a common spring.
From the same source I have not taken
My sorrow; I could not awaken
My heart to joy at the same tone;
And all I loved, *I* loved alone.
Then — in my childhood, in the dawn
Of a most stormy life — was drawn
From every depth of good and ill
The mystery which binds me still:
From the torrent, or the fountain,
From the red cliff of the mountain,
From the sun that round me rolled
In its autumn tint of gold,
From the lightning in the sky
As it passed me flying by,
From the thunder and the storm,
And the cloud that took the form
(When the rest of Heaven was blue)
Of a demon in my view.

NOTES

TOGETHER WITH A COMPLETE VARI-
ORUM TEXT OF THE POEMS



NOTES

I

ON THE POEMS

THE sources of the text for Poe's poems are the four editions published by him, 1827, 1829, 1831, 1845, and the newspapers, journals, and magazines to which he contributed poems; viz., the Baltimore "Saturday Visiter," "Southern Literary Messenger," "Burton's Gentleman's Magazine," Baltimore "American Museum," Philadelphia "Saturday Evening Post," "Graham's Magazine," Philadelphia "Saturday Museum," "Broadway Journal," "American Whig Review," "Union Magazine," "Sartain's Union Magazine," "Flag of our Union." In one or two instances in which the first issue of a poem is either unknown or not found, the text of Griswold, 1850, is the sole authority. The main MS. source, superior to these texts, is the Lorimer Graham copy of the 1845 edition, which contains marginal corrections in Poe's hand. The Wilmer MS. (see Preface) affords new early readings. The collation of the several editions is as follows:

1827

TAMERLANE | AND | OTHER POEMS | By a Bostonian | Young heads are giddy and young hearts are warm | And make mistakes for manhood to reform. | COWPER | BOSTON | Calvin F. S. Thomas, Printer | 1827.

NOTES

Collation [$6\frac{3}{8} \times 4\frac{1}{8}$ inches]. Title (with blank verso), pp. 1-2; Preface, pp. 3-4; Tamerlane, pp. 5-21; Blank verso, p. 22; Half-title, Fugitive Pieces (with blank verso), pp. 23-24; Fugitive Pieces, pp. 25-34; Half-title, Notes (with blank verso), pp. 35-36; Notes, pp. 37-40.

Issued as a pamphlet, in yellow covers. Three copies are known. The text follows the Reprint by R. H. Shepard, London, 1884, which corrects printer's errors, but gives them in a list by themselves in the Preface.

1829

AL AARAAF | TAMERLANE | AND | MINOR POEMS | By
Edgar A. Poe. | Baltimore: | Hatch & Dunning | 1829.

Collation: Octavo. Title (with copyright and imprint on verso), pp. 1-2; Motto:—Entiendes, etc. (with blank verso), pp. 3-4; Half-title, Al Aaraaf (with motto What has Night, etc. on verso), pp. 5-6; Dedication. | Who Drinks the deepest?—here's to him. | Cleveland (with blank verso), pp. 7-8; Motto, "A star was discovered," etc. (with blank verso), pp. 9-10; Sonnet, "Science," etc. (with blank verso), pp. 11-12; Al Aaraaf | Part 1, pp. 13-21; Blank verso, p. 22; Half-title, Al Aaraaf (with blank verso), pp. 23-24; Al Aaraaf | Part 2, pp. 25-38; Half-title, Tamerlane (with Advertisement | This poem was printed for publication in Boston, in the year | 1827, but suppressed through circumstances of a private nature, on verso), pp. 39-40; Dedication, To | John Neal | This Poem | is | respectfully dedicated (with blank verso), pp. 41-42; Tamerlane, pp. 43-54; Half-title, Miscellaneous Poems (with motto: My nothingness, etc., on verso), pp. 55-56; Poems (no title), pp. 57-71. Issued in blue boards.

NOTES

1831

POEMS | By | Edgar A. Poe | Tout le Monde a Raison. — Rochefoucault. | Second Edition | New York. | Published by Elam Bliss | 1831.

Collation: Duodecimo. Half-title, Poems (with blank verso), pp. 1-2; Title (with imprint on verso), pp. 3-4. Dedication, To | The U. S. Corps of Cadets | This Volume | is Respectfully Dedicated (with blank verso), pp. 5-6; Contents (with blank verso), pp. 7-8; Half-title, Letter (with blank verso), pp. 9-10; Motto, "Tell wit," etc. (with blank verso), pp. 11-12; Letter to Mr. ——— (with blank verso), pp. 13-30; Half-title, Introduction (with blank verso), pp. 31-32; Introduction, pp. 33-36; Half-title, Helen (with blank verso), pp. 37-38; To Helen (with blank verso), pp. 39-40; Half-title, Israfel (with blank verso), pp. 41-42; Israfel (with blank verso), pp. 43-46; Half-title, The Doomed City (with blank verso), pp. 47-48; The Doomed City (with blank verso), pp. 49-52; Half-title, Fairyland (with blank verso), pp. 53-54; Fairy Land, pp. 55-58; Half-title, Irene (with blank verso), 59-60; Irene, pp. 61-64; Half-title, A Pæan (with blank verso), pp. 65-66; A Pæan, pp. 67-70; Half-title Valley Nis (with blank verso), pp. 71-72; The Valley Nis (with blank verso), pp. 73-76; Half-title, Al Aaraaf, p. 77; Motto, "What has Night to do with Sleep?" — *Comus*, p. 78; "A Star was discovered," etc. (with blank verso), pp. 79-80; Sonnet, "Science" (with blank verso), pp. 81-82; Al Aaraaf | Part First | pp. 83-92; Half-title, Al Aaraaf (with blank verso), pp. 93-94; Al Aaraaf | Part Second, pp. 95-108; Half-title, Tamerlane (with blank verso), pp. 109-110; Tamerlane, pp. 111-124. Issued in green boards.

NOTES

The prefatory "Letter to Mr. ————" was republished, slightly revised, in the "Southern Literary Messenger," July, 1836, with the following note: "These detached passages form part of the preface to a small volume printed some years ago for private circulation. They have vigor and much originality—but of course we shall not be called upon to indorse all the writer's opinions."

In the original form, 1831, the letter is as follows:—

LETTER TO MR. ————

WEST POINT, ———, 1831.

DEAR B——

.

Believing only a portion of my former volume to be worthy a second edition,—that small portion I thought it as well to include in the present book as to republish by itself. I have therefore herein combined "Al Aaraaf" and "Tamerlane" with other Poems hitherto unprinted. Nor have I hesitated to insert from the "Minor Poems" now omitted whole lines, and even passages, to the end that, being placed in a fairer light and the trash shaken from them in which they were embedded, they may have some chance of being seen by posterity.

It has been said that a good critique on a poem may be written by one who is no poet himself. This, according to *your* idea and *mine* of poetry, I feel to be false—the less poetical the critic, the less just the critique, and the converse. On this account, and because there are but few B——'s in the world, I would be as much ashamed of the world's good opinion as proud of your own. Another than yourself might here

NOTES

observe, "Shakespeare is in possession of the world's good opinion, and yet Shakespeare is the greatest of poets. It appears then that the world judge correctly, why should you be ashamed of their favorable judgment?" The difficulty lies in the interpretation of the word "judgment" or "opinion." The opinion is the world's, truly, but it may be called theirs as a man would call a book his, having bought it; he did not write the book, but it is his; they did not originate the opinion, but it is theirs. A fool, for example, thinks Shakespeare a great poet — yet the fool has never read Shakespeare. But the fool's neighbor, who is a step higher on the Andes of the mind, whose head (that is to say, his more exalted thought) is too far above the fool to be seen or understood, but whose feet (by which I mean his every-day actions) are sufficiently near to be discerned, and by means of which that superiority is ascertained, which *but* for them would never have been discovered, — this neighbor asserts that Shakespeare is a great poet, — the fool believes him, and it is henceforward his *opinion*. This neighbor's own opinion has, in like manner, been adopted from one above *him*, and so, ascendingly, to a few gifted individuals, who kneel around the summit, beholding, face to face, the master-spirit who stands upon the pinnacle.

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You are aware of the great barrier in the path of an American writer. He is read, if at all, in preference to the combined and established wit of the world. I say established; for it is with literature as with law or empire — an established name is an estate in tenure, or a throne in possession. Besides, one might suppose that books, like their authors, improve by travel

NOTES

— their having crossed the sea is, with us, so great a distinction. Our antiquaries abandon time for distance; our very fops glance from the binding to the bottom of the titlepage, where the mystic characters which spell London, Paris, or Genoa, are precisely so many letters of recommendation.

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I mentioned just now a vulgar error as regards criticism. I think the notion that no poet can form a correct estimate of his own writings is another. I remarked before, that in proportion to the poetical talent, would be the justice of a critique upon poetry. Therefore, a bad poet would, I grant, make a false critique, and his self-love would infallibly bias his little judgment in his favor; but a poet, who is indeed a poet, could not, I think, fail of making a just critique. Whatever should be deducted on the score of self-love, might be replaced on account of his intimate acquaintance with the subject; in short, we have more instances of false criticism than of just, where one's own writings are the test, simply because we have more bad poets than good. There are of course many objections to what I say: Milton is a great example of the contrary; but his opinion with respect to the "Paradise Regained" is by no means fairly ascertained. By what trivial circumstances men are often led to assert what they do not really believe! Perhaps an inadvertent word has descended to posterity. But, in fact, the "Paradise Regained" is little, if at all, inferior to the "Paradise Lost," and is only supposed so to be, because men do not like epics, whatever they may say to the contrary, and reading those of Milton in their natural order, are too much wearied with the first to derive any pleasure from the second.

NOTES

I dare say Milton preferred "Comus" to either — if so — justly.

.

As I am speaking of poetry, it will not be amiss to touch slightly upon the most singular heresy in its modern history — the heresy of what is called, very foolishly, the Lake School. Some years ago I might have been induced, by an occasion like the present, to attempt a formal refutation of their doctrine; at present it would be a work of supererogation. The wise must bow to the wisdom of such men as Coleridge and Southey, but being wise, have laughed at poetical theories so prosaically exemplified.

Aristotle, with singular assurance, has declared poetry the most philosophical of all writings; but it required a Wordsworth to pronounce it the most metaphysical. He seems to think that the end of poetry is, or should be, instruction — yet it is a truism that the end of our existence is happiness; if so, the end of every separate part of our existence — everything connected with our existence should be still happiness. Therefore the end of instruction should be happiness; and happiness is another name for pleasure; — therefore the end of instruction should be pleasure: yet we see the above-mentioned opinion implies precisely the reverse.

To proceed: *ceteris paribus*, he who pleases is of more importance to his fellow-men than he who instructs, since utility is happiness, and pleasure is the end already obtained which instruction is merely the means of obtaining.

I see no reason, then, why our metaphysical poets should plume themselves so much on the utility of their works, unless indeed they refer to instruction

NOTES

with eternity in view; in which case, sincere respect for their piety would not allow me to express my contempt for their judgment; contempt which it would be difficult to conceal, since their writings are professedly to be understood by the few, and it is the many who stand in need of salvation. In such case I should no doubt be tempted to think of the devil in "Melmoth," who labors indefatigably through three octavo volumes to accomplish the destruction of one or two souls, while any common devil would have demolished one or two thousand.

.

Against the subtleties which would make poetry a study — not a passion — it becomes the metaphysician to reason — but the poet to protest. Yet Wordsworth and Coleridge are men in years; the one imbued in contemplation from his childhood, the other a giant in intellect and learning. The diffidence, then, with which I venture to dispute their authority, would be overwhelming, did I not feel, from the bottom of my heart, that learning has little to do with the imagination — intellect with the passions — or age with poetry.

.

"Trifles, like straws, upon the surface flow,
He who would search for pearls must dive below,"

are lines which have done much mischief. As regards the greater truths, men oftener err by seeking them at the bottom than at the top; the depth lies in the huge abysses where wisdom is sought — not in the palpable palaces where she is found. The ancients were not always right in hiding the goddess in a well: witness the light which Bacon has thrown upon philosophy; wit-

NOTES

ness the principles of our divine faith — that moral mechanism by which the simplicity of a child may over-balance the wisdom of a man. Poetry above all things is a beautiful painting whose tints to minute inspection are confusion worse confounded, but start boldly out to the cursory glance of the connoisseur.

We see an instance of Coleridge's liability to err, in his "Biographia Literaria" — professedly his literary life and opinions, but, in fact, a treatise *de omni scibili et quibusdam aliis*. He goes wrong by reason of his very profundity, and of his error we have a natural type in the contemplation of a star. He who regards it directly and intensely sees, it is true, the star, but it is the star without a ray — while he who surveys it less inquisitively is conscious of all for which the star is useful to us below — its brilliancy and its beauty.

.

As to Wordsworth, I have no faith in him. That he had, in youth, the feelings of a poet I believe — for there are glimpses of extreme delicacy in his writings — (and delicacy is the poet's own kingdom — his *El Dorado*) — but they have the appearance of a better day recollected; and glimpses, at best, are little evidence of present poetic fire — we know that a few straggling flowers spring up daily in the crevices of the avalanche.

He was to blame in wearing away his youth in contemplation with the end of poetizing in his manhood. With the increase of his judgment the light which should make it apparent has faded away. His judgment consequently is too correct. This may not be understood, — but the old Goths of Germany would have understood it, who used to debate matters of importance to their State twice, once when drunk, and

NOTES

once when sober — sober that they might not be deficient in formality — drunk lest they should be destitute of vigor.

The long wordy discussions by which he tries to reason us into admiration of his poetry, speak very little in his favor: they are full of such assertions as this — (I have opened one of his volumes at random) “Of genius the only proof is the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and what was never done before” — indeed! then it follows that in doing what is *un*worthy to be done, or what *has* been done before, no genius can be evinced; yet the picking of pockets is an unworthy act, pockets have been picked time immemorial, and Barrington, the pickpocket, in point of genius, would have thought hard of a comparison with William Wordsworth, the poet.

Again — in estimating the merit of certain poems, whether they be Ossian's or M'Pherson's, can surely be of little consequence, yet, in order to prove their worthlessness, Mr. W—— has expended many pages in the controversy. *Tantæne animis?* Can great minds descend to such absurdity? But worse still: that he may bear down every argument in favor of these poems, he triumphantly drags forward a passage, in his abomination of which he expects the reader to sympathize. It is the beginning of the epic poem “Temora.” “The blue waves of Ullin roll in light; the green hills are covered with day; trees shake their dusky heads in the breeze.” And this — this gorgeous, yet simple imagery, where all is alive and panting with immortality — this, William Wordsworth, the author of “Peter Bell,” has *selected* to dignify with his imperial contempt. We shall see what better he, in his own person, has to offer. Imprimis: —

NOTES

“ And now she’s at the poney’s head,
And now she’s at the poney’s tail,
On that side now, and now on this,
And almost stifled her with bliss —
A few sad tears does Betty shed,
She pats the poney where or when
She knows not: happy Betty Foy!
O, Johnny! never mind the Doctor!”

Secondly:—

“ The dew was falling fast, the — stars began to blink,
I heard a voice; it said — drink, pretty creature, drink;
And, looking o’er the hedge, be — fore me I espied
A snow-white mountain lamb, with a — maiden at its side.
No other sheep were near; the lamb was all alone,
And by a slender cord was — tether’d to a stone.”

Now, we have no doubt this is all true; we *will* believe it, indeed, we will, Mr. W——. Is it sympathy for the sheep you wish to excite? I love a sheep from the bottom of my heart.

.

But there *are* occasions, dear B——, there are occasions when even Wordsworth is reasonable. Even Stamboul, it is said, shall have an end, and the most unlucky blunders must come to a conclusion. Here is an extract from his preface:—

“ Those who have been accustomed to the phraseology of modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to a conclusion (*impossible!*), will, no doubt, have to struggle with feelings of awkwardness; (ha! ha! ha!) they will look round for poetry (ha! ha! ha! ha!) and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts have been permitted to assume that title. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!”

NOTES

Yet, let not Mr. W—— despair; he has given immortality to a wagon, and the bee Sophocles has eternalized a sore toe, and dignified a tragedy with a chorus of turkeys.

.

Of Coleridge, I cannot speak but with reverence. His towering intellect! his gigantic power! To use an author quoted by himself, “J’ai trouvé souvent que la plupart des sectes ont raison dans une bonne partie de ce qu’elles avancent, mais non pas en ce qu’elles nient,” and to employ his own language, he has imprisoned his own conceptions by the barrier he has erected against those of others. It is lamentable to think that such a mind should be buried in metaphysics, and, like the Nyctanthes, waste its perfume upon the night alone. In reading that man’s poetry, I tremble, like one who stands upon a volcano, conscious, from the very darkness bursting from the crater, of the fire and the light that are weltering below.

.

What is Poetry? — Poetry! that Proteus-like idea, with as many appellations as the nine-titled Corcyra! “Give me,” I demanded of a scholar some time ago, “give me a definition of poetry.” “Très-volontiers;” and he proceeded to his library, brought me a Dr. Johnson, and overwhelmed me with a definition. Shade of the immortal Shakespeare! I imagine to myself the scowl of your spiritual eye upon the profanity of that scurrilous Ursa Major. Think of poetry, dear B——, think of poetry, and then think of — Dr. Samuel Johnson! Think of all that is airy and fairylike, and then of all that is hideous and unwieldy; think of his huge bulk, the Elephant! and then — and then think of the

NOTES

“Tempest” — the “Midsummer Night’s Dream” —
Prospero — Oberon — and Titania!

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A poem, in my opinion, is opposed to a work of science by having, for its *immediate* object, pleasure, not truth; to romance, by having, for its object, an *indefinite* instead of a *definite* pleasure, being a poem only so far as this object is attained; romance presenting perceptible images with definite, poetry with *indefinite* sensations, to which end music is an *essential*, since the comprehension of sweet sound is our most indefinite conception. Music, when combined with a pleasurable idea, is poetry; music, without the idea, is simply music; the idea, without the music, is prose, from its very definitiveness.

What was meant by the invective against him who had no music in his soul?

.

To sum up this long rigmarole, I have, dear B——, what you, no doubt, perceive, for the metaphysical poets, *as* poets, the most sovereign contempt. That they have followers proves nothing —

No Indian prince has to his palace
More followers than a thief to the gallows.

1845

THE RAVEN | AND | OTHER POEMS. | By | Edgar A.
Poe, | New York: | Wiley and Putnam, 161 Broad-
way. | 1845.

Collation: Duodecimo. Fly-title, Wiley and Putnam’s | Library of | American Books. | The Raven and Other Poems. — Title (with copyright and imprint on verso), pp. i-ii; Dedication (with blank

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verso), pp. iii-iv; Preface (with Contents on verso), pp. v-vi; The Raven and Other Poems, pp. 1-51; Blank verso, p. 52; Half-title, Poems Written in Youth (with blank verso), pp. 53-54; Poems Written in Youth, pp. 55-91. Issued in paper covers.

THE RAVEN

The Raven. The "Evening Mirror," Jan. 29, 1845;
The "American Whig Review," February, 1845
(by "Quarles"); "Broadway Journal," i. 6;
1845.

TEXT. 1845, Lorimer Graham copy. Other readings:

II. 3 *sought* | *tried* Am. W. R.; B. J.

V. 3 *stillness* | *darkness* Am. W. R.; B. J.;
1845.

VI. 1 *Back* | *Then* Am. W. R.; B. J.

2 *again I heard* | *I heard again* Am. W.
R.; B. J.; 1845.

VII. 3 *minute* | *instant* Am. W. R.; B. J.;
1845; *moment* Poe's "Philosophy of
Composition."

IX. 3 *living human* | *sublunary* Am. W. R.

6 *Then the bird said* | *Quoth the raven*
Am. W. R.

XI. 1 *Startled* | *Wondering* Am. W. R.

4-6 *till . . . nevermore.' "* | *so when*
Hope he would adjure

Stern Despair returned, instead of the
sweet Hope he dared adjure,

That sad answer, 'Nevermore.' " Am.
W. R.

5 *that* | *the* B. J.

6 *Of 'Nevermore' — of 'Nevermore.' "*
B. J.

NOTES

XII. 1 *fancy* | *sad soul* Am. W. R.; B. J.;
1845.

XIV. 2 *Seraphim whose* | *angels whose faint*
Am. W. R.; B. J.; 1845.

5 *Quaff, oh* | *Let me* Am. W. R.

XVIII. 3 *demon's* | *demon* Am. W. R.; B. J.

NOTES. "Evening Mirror," Jan. 24, 1845:—

"We are permitted to copy, from the second number of 'The American Review,' the following remarkable poem by Edgar Poe. In our opinion it is the most effective single example of 'fugitive poetry' ever published in this country, and unsurpassed in English poetry for subtle conception, masterly ingenuity of versification, and consistent sustaining of imaginative lift and 'pokerishness.' It is one of those 'dainties bred in a book,' which we feed on. It will stick to the memory of everybody who reads it."

"American Whig Review," February, 1845:—

"The following lines from a correspondent, besides the deep quaint strain of the sentiment, and the curious introduction of some ludicrous touches amidst the serious and impressive, as was doubtless intended by the author,—appear to us one of the most felicitous specimens of unique rhyming which has for some time met our eye. The resources of English rhythm for varieties of melody, measure, and sound, producing corresponding diversities of effect, have been thoroughly studied, much more perceived, by very few poets in the language. While the classic tongues, especially the Greek, possess, by power of accent, several advantages for versification over our own, chiefly through greater abundance of spondaic feet, we have other and very great advantages

NOTES

of sound by the modern usage of rhyme. Alliteration is nearly the only effect of that kind which the ancients had in common with us. It will be seen that much of the melody of 'The Raven' arises from alliteration, and the studious use of similar sounds in unusual places. In regard to its measure, it may be noted that, if all the verses were like the second, they might properly be placed merely in short lines, producing a not uncommon form; but the presence in all the others of one line — mostly the second in the verse — which flows continuously, with *only* an aspirate pause in the middle, like that before the short line in the Sapphic Adonic, while the fifth has at the middle pause no similarity of sound with any part beside, gives the versification an entirely different effect. We could wish the capacities of our noble language, in prosody, were better understood."

Inspection of the above readings shows the poem in four states: first, as originally issued, Jan. 29, 1845; second, as revised in the "Broadway Journal," i. 6, Feb. 8, 1845; third, as revised in the edition of 1845; fourth, as revised in the Lorimer Graham copy of that edition, in Poe's MS.

The earliest date assigned to the composition or draft of the poem is the summer of 1842. Dr. William Elliot Griffis, in the "Home Journal," Nov. 5, 1884, says that Poe was, in the summer of 1842, at the Barhyte trout-ponds, Saratoga Springs, New York, and mentioned the poem "to be called 'The Raven'" to Mrs. Barhyte, who was a contributor to the New York "Mirror." The next summer Poe was again at the same resort; and a conversation between him and a lad about the bird in the poem is reported by Dr. Griffis, who adds that Mrs. Barhyte was shown the draft. This

NOTES

lady died in April, 1844. These statements seem to be derived from Mr. Barhyte's recollection of what his wife said. Dr. Griffis sent this account in manuscript to the present writer; but it was not embodied in the biography of Poe, then being prepared, because it was thought best to admit into that volume only such new facts as were supported by contemporary documents. The next earliest date for the poem is given by Mr. Rosenbach in the "American," Feb. 26, 1887. "I read 'The Raven' long before it was published, and was in Mr. George R. Graham's office when the poem was offered to him. Poe said that his wife and Mrs. Clemm were starving, and that he was in very pressing need of the money. I carried him fifteen dollars contributed by Mr. Graham, Mr. Godey, Mr. McMichael, and others, who condemned the poem, but gave the money as a charity." This was before Poe's removal to New York, and places the date of composition certainly as early as the winter of 1843-44. Other accounts of the poem, before publication, were given by F. G. Fairfield in the "Scribner's," October, 1875, as follows:—

"Poe then occupied a cottage at Fordham, — a kind of poet's nook, just out of hearing of the busy hum of the city. He had walked all the way from New York that afternoon, and, having taken a cup of tea, went out in the evening and wandered about for an hour or more. His beloved Virginia was sick almost unto death; he was without money to procure the necessary medicines. He was out until about ten o'clock. When he went in he sat down at his writing-table and dashed off 'The Raven.' He submitted it to Mrs. Clemm for her consideration the same night, and it was printed substantially as it was written.

"This account of the origin of the poem was com-

NOTES

municated to me in the fall of 1865, by a gentleman who professed to be indebted to Mrs. Clemm for the facts as he stated them; and in the course of a saunter in the South, in the summer of 1867, I took occasion to verify his story by an interview with that aged lady. Let me now drop Mrs. Clemm's version for a paragraph to consider another, resting upon the testimony of Colonel Du Solle, who was intimate with Poe at this period, and concurred in by other literary contemporaries who used to meet him of a midday for a budget of gossip and a glass of ale at Sandy Welsh's cellar in Ann Street.

"Du Solle says that the poem was produced stanza by stanza at small intervals, and submitted by Poe piecemeal to the criticism and emendation of his intimates, who suggested various alterations and substitutions. Poe adopted many of them. Du Solle quotes particular instances of phrases that were incorporated at his suggestion, and thus 'The Raven' was a kind of joint-stock affair in which many minds held small shares of intellectual capital. At length, when the last stone had been placed in position and passed upon, the structure was voted complete."

Poe was in the habit of declaiming his compositions, when intoxicated, in liquor saloons.

An unimportant account of his offering the poem to Mr. Holley of the "American Whig Review" is given in "The South," November, 1875, quoted in Ingram, "The Raven," p. 24. Mr. Ingram also quotes from what is clearly a hoax, a letter signed J. Shaver, dated New Orleans, July 29, 1870, and quoting from an alleged letter, Poe to Daniels, Sept. 29, 1849, in which Poe is made to confess that the poem was written by Samuel Fenwick, and that he signed his own name to it and sent it for publication when intoxicated, Mr. Fen-

NOTES

wick being then dead. The present writer would not have thought it necessary to include this story, if it had not already found its way into books. The letter, which was published in the "New Orleans Times," and now lies before us, there is no occasion to reprint.

The commentary on the poem by Poe, in "The Philosophy of Composition," and *passim*, in the critical papers, need only be referred to. The obligation to Mrs. Browning's "Lady Geraldine's Courtship" is obvious, but does not affect the true originality of the poem; that to Pike's 'Isadore' is wholly illusory, there being a dozen poems by contemporaneous minor authors in respect to which an equally good case can be made out. Indeed, some of them really thought that Poe had "plagiarized" fame from their verses. A monograph, "The Raven," London, 1885, by Mr. J. H. Ingram, to which reference has been made above, contains several translations, parodies, etc., and gives an account of the genesis, history, and bibliography of the poem.

THE BRIDAL BALLAD

The Bridal Ballad. "Southern Literary Messenger," January, 1837; Philadelphia "Saturday Evening Post," July 31, 1841; 1845; "Broadway Journal," ii. 4.

Song of The Newly Wedded. Philadelphia "Saturday Museum," March 4, 1843.

TEXT. 1845. Lorimer Graham copy. Other readings:—

I. 3 Insert after:

and many a rood of land S. L. M.

II. 1 *He has loved me long and well* S. L. M.

2 *But* | *And; first* | omit S. L. M.

4 *as* | *like* B. J.

NOTES

rang as a knell | were his who fell S. L.

M. *rang like a knell* B. J.

5 omit S. L. M.

III. 1 *But | And* S. L. M.

3 *While | But* S. L. M.

6 omit S. L. M.

7 Insert after:—

And thus they said I plighted

An irrevocable vow —

And my friends are all delighted

That his love I have requited —

And my mind is much benighted

If I am not happy now.

Lo! the ring is on my hand,

And the wreath is on my brow —

Satins and jewels grand,

And many a rood of land,

Are all at my command,

And I must be happy now.

S. L. M.

IV. 1-2 I have spoken, I have spoken

They have registered the vow.

S. L. M.

It was spoken — it was spoken —

Quick they registered the vow.

S. E. P.

5 *Here is a ring as | Behold the golden* all
other editions.

6 *I am | proves me* all other editions.

V. 5 *Lest | And* S. L. M.

NOTES. In connection with this, and also the poem "Lenore," the following, from the "Southern Literary Messenger," August, 1835, is of interest:—

NOTES

“ Mr. White: —

“ The subjoined copy of an old Scotch ballad contains so much of the beauty and genuine spirit of by-gone poetry that I have determined to risk a frown from the fair lady by whom the copy was furnished, in submitting it for publication. The ladies sometimes violate their promises — may I not for once assume their privilege, in presenting to the readers of the ‘ Messenger ’ this ‘ legend of the olden time,’ although I *promised not?* Relying on the kind heart of the lady for forgiveness for *this breach of promise*, I have anticipated the pardon in sending you the lines, which I have never as yet seen in print.

“ BALLAD

“ THEY have giv’n her to another,
They have sever’d ev’ry vow;
They have giv’n her to another,
And my heart is lonely now;
They remember’d not our parting —
They remember’d not our tears,
They have sever’d in one fatal hour
The tenderness of years.
Oh! was it weel to leave me?
Thou couldst not so deceive me;
Lang and sairly shall I grieve thee,
Lost, lost Rosabel!

“ They have giv’n thee to another —
Thou art now his gentle bride;
Had I lov’d thee as a brother,
I might see thee by his side;
But *I know with gold they won thee*
And thy trusting heart beguil’d;

NOTES

Thy *mother*, too, did shun me,
For she knew I lov'd her child.
Oh! was it weel, etc.

"They have giv'n her to another —
She will love him, so they say;
If her mem'ry do not chide her,
Oh, perhaps, perhaps she may;
But I know that she hath spoken
What she never can forget;
And tho' my poor heart be broken,
It will love her, love her yet.
Oh! was it weel, etc."

THE SLEEPER

The Sleeper. Philadelphia "Saturday Museum," March
4, 1843; 1845; "Broadway Journal," i. 18 | *Irene*.
1831; "Southern Literary Messenger," May,
1836.

TEXT. 1845. Lorimer Graham copy. Other readings: —

16 Insert after: —

Her casement open to the skies S. M.; 1845;
B. J.

19 *window* | *lattice* S. M.

20–21 omit S. M.

46 *pale* | *dim* S. M.; 1845; B. J.

The first version is 1831, as follows, other early readings being noted below: —

IRENE

'T is now (so sings the soaring moon)
Midnight in the sweet month of June,

NOTES

When winged visions love to lie
Lazily upon beauty's eye,
Or worse — upon her brow to dance
In panoply of old romance,
Till thoughts and locks are left, alas!
A ne'er-to-be untangled mass.

An influence dewy, drowsy, dim,
Is dripping from that golden rim;
Grey towers are mouldering into rest,
Wrapping the fog around their breast:
Looking like Lethe, see! the lake
A conscious slumber seems to take
And would not for the world awake:
The rosemary sleeps upon the grave —
The lily lolls upon the wave —
And million bright pines to and fro
Are rocking lullabies as they go,
To the lone oak that reels with bliss,
Nodding above the dim abyss.

All beauty sleeps: and lo! where lies
With casement open to the skies,
Irene, with her destinies!
Thus hums the moon within her ear,

1-2 I stand beneath the soaring moon
At midnight in the month of June.

S. L. M.

3-8 omit S. L. M.

10 *that* | *yon* S. L. M.

18 *bright pines* | *cedars* S. L. M.

20 *reels with bliss* | *nodding hangs* S. L. M.

21 *Above yon cataract of Serangs* S. L. M.

25 And hark the sounds so low yet clear

NOTES

“O lady sweet! how camest thou here?
“Strange are thine eyelids — strange thy dress!
“And strange thy glorious length of tress!
“Sure thou art come o’er far-off seas,
“A wonder to our desert trees!
“Some gentle wind hath thought it right
“To open thy window to the night,
“And wanton airs from the tree-top,
“Laughingly thro’ the lattice drop,
“And wave this crimson canopy,
“Like a banner o’er thy dreaming eye!
“Lady, awake! lady awake!
“For the holy Jesus’ sake!
“For strangely — fearfully in this hall
“My tinted shadows rise and fall!”

The lady sleeps: the *dead* all sleep —
At least as long as Love doth weep:
Entranc’d, the spirit loves to lie
As long as — tears on Memory’s eye:
But when a week or two go by,
And the light laughter chokes the sigh,
Indignant from the tomb doth take

(Like music of another sphere)
Which steal within the slumberer’s ear,
Or so appear — or so appear!

S. L. M.

36 *Like* | *as* S. L. M.

37–39 “That o’er the floor, and down the wall,
“Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall —
“Then for thine own all radiant sake,
“Lady, awake! awake! awake!”

S. L. M.

40–58 omit S. L. M.

NOTES

Its way to some remember'd lake,
Where oft — in life — with friends — it went
To bathe in the pure element,
And there from the untrodden grass,
Wreathing for its transparent brow
Those flowers that say (ah hear them now!)
To the night-winds as they pass,
“Ai! ai! alas! — alas!”

Pores for a moment, ere it go,
On the clear waters there that flow,
Then sinks within (weigh'd down by wo)
Th' uncertain, shadowy heaven below.

.

The lady sleeps: oh! may her sleep
As it is lasting so be deep —
No icy worms about her creep:
I pray to God that she may lie
Forever with as calm an eye,
That chamber chang'd for one more holy —
That bed for one more melancholy.

Far in the forest, dim and old,
For her may some tall vault unfold,
Against whose sounding door she hath thrown,
In childhood, many an idle stone —
Some tomb, which oft hath flung its black
And vampyre-winged pannels back,
Flutt'ring triumphant o'er the palls
Of her old family funerals.

LENORE

Lenore. The “Pioneer,” February, 1843; Philadelphia “Saturday Museum,” March 4, 1843; 1845;

NOTES

“Broadway Journal,” ii. 6 | *A Pæan*. 1831;

“Southern Literary Messenger,” January, 1836.

TEXT. 1845, Lorimer Graham copy. Other readings:

IV. “Avaunt! to-night my heart is light. No
dirge will I upraise,

“But waft the angel on her flight with a
Pæan of old days!

“Let *no* bell toll! — lest her sweet soul, amid
its hallowed mirth,

“Should catch the note, as it doth float —
up from the damnéd Earth.

“To friends above, from fiends below, the
indignant ghost is riven —

“From Hell unto a high estate far up within
the Heaven —

“From grief and groan, to a golden throne,
beside the King of Heaven.”

1845: B. J. (except

7 *grief* | *moan*).

Poe wrote to Griswold, no date, 1849, enclosing copy for the new edition of Griswold's “Poets and Poetry of America”: “As regards ‘Lenore’ I would prefer the concluding stanza to run as here written.” No change appears in Griswold's texts. In the Lorimer Graham copy the revised version is written upon the margin, and a transposition of the first four lines and the last three of stanza IV is indicated. In the judgment of the editors Poe meant only to substitute the new four lines on the margin for the four which he crosses out, and has marked his caret in the wrong place; the transposition has therefore not been made in the present text.

The first version is 1831, as follows, the readings

NOTES

of the "Southern Literary Messenger" being noted below:—

A PÆAN

How shall the burial rite be read?
The solemn song be sung?
The requiem for the loveliest dead
That ever died so young?

Her friends are gazing on her,
And on her gaudy bier,
And weep!—oh! to dishonor
Dead beauty with a tear!

They loved her for her wealth—
And they hated her for her pride—
But she grew in feeble health,
And they *love* her — that she died.

They tell me (while they speak
Of her "costly broider'd pall")
That my voice is growing weak—
That I should not sing at all—

Or that my tone should be
Tun'd to such solemn song
So mournfully — so mournfully,
That the dead may feel no wrong.

But she is gone above,
With young Hope at her side,
And I am drunk with love
Of the dead, who is my bride. —

NOTES

Of the dead — dead who lies
 All perfum'd there,
 With the death upon her eyes
 And the life upon her hair.

Thus on the coffin loud and long
 I strike — the murmur sent
 Through the gray chambers to my song,
 Shall be the accompaniment.

Thou died'st in thy life's June —
 But thou didst not die too fair:
 Thou didst not die too soon,
 Nor with too calm an air.

From more than fiends on earth
 Thy life and love are riven,
 To join the untainted mirth
 Of more than thrones in heaven —

Therefore, to thee this night
 I will no requiem raise,
 But waft thee on thy flight,
 With a Pæan of old days.

- VII. 1 *dead who* | *dead* — *who* S. L. M.
 2 *perfum'd there* | *motionless* S. L. M.
 4 *her hair* | *each tress* S. L. M.

VIII. omit S. L. M.

- IX. 1, 2 In June she died — in June
 Of life — beloved, and fair S. L. M.
 3 *Thou didst* | *But she did* S. L. M.

- X. 2 *Thy life and love are* | *Helen,*
 thy soul is S. L. M.
 3 *untainted* | *all-hallowed* S. L. M.

NOTES

The "Pioneer" version, 1843, is as follows, the readings of the "Saturday Museum" being noted below:—

LENORE

Ан, Broken is the golden bowl!
The spirit flown forever!
Let the bell toll!—A saintly soul
Glides down the Stygian river!
And let the burial rite be read—
The funeral song be sung—
A dirge for the most lovely dead
That ever died so young!
And, Guy De Vere,
Hast *thou* no tear?
Weep now or nevermore!
See, on yon drear
And rigid bier,
Low lies thy love Lenore!

"Yon heir, whose cheeks of pallid hue
With tears are streaming wet,
Sees only, through
Their crocodile dew,
A vacant coronet—
False friends! ye lov'd her for her wealth
And hated her for pride,
And, when she fell in feeble health,
Ye bless'd her—that she died.
How *shall* the ritual, then, be read?
The requiem *how* be sung
For her most wrong'd of all the dead
That ever died so young?"

NOTES

Peccavimus!

But rave not thus!

And let the solemn song

Go up to God so mournfully that *she* may feel no
wrong!

The sweet Lenore

Hath "gone before"

With young Hope at her side,

And thou art wild

For the dear child

That should have been thy bride —

For her, the fair

And debonair,

That now so lowly lies —

The life still there

Upon her hair,

The death upon her eyes.

"Avaunt! — to-night

My heart, is light —

No dirge will I upraise,

But waft the angel on her flight

With a Pæan of old days!

Let *no* bell toll!

Lest her sweet soul,

Amid its hallow'd mirth,

Should catch the note

As it doth float

Up from the damnèd earth —

To friends above, from fiends be-
low, th' indignant ghost is
riven —

From grief and moan

To a gold throne

Beside the King of Heaven."

NOTES

DREAMLAND

Dreamland. "Graham's Magazine," June, 1844; 1845;
"Broadway Journal," i. 26.

TEXT. 1845. Lorimer Graham copy. Other readings:—

12 *tears* | *dews* G. M.; 1845; B. J.

20 Insert after:—

1-6, as above, except, 5, read *my home* for
these lands, and, 6, *this* for *an* G. M.

25 *mountain* G. M.; B. J.

38 *Earth* | *worms* G. M.; B. J.

Insert after:—

1-6, as above, except, 5, read *journeyed*
home for *reached these lands*, and, 6, *this*
for *an* G. M.

47 *its* | *the* G. M.; B. J.

THE VALLEY OF UNREST

The Valley of Unrest. "American Whig Review,"
April, 1845; 1845; "Broadway Journal," ii. 9 |
The Valley Nis. 1831; "Southern Literary Mes-
senger," February, 1836.

TEXT. 1845. Other readings:—

18 *rustles* Am. W. R.

19 *Unceasingly* Am. W. R.

27 Insert after:—

They wave; they weep; and the tears as they well
From the depths of each pallid lily-bell,
Give a trickle and a tinkle and a knell.

Am. W. R.

The first version is 1831, as follows, other early
readings being noted below:—

NOTES

THE VALLEY NIS

FAR away — far away —
Far away — as far at least
Lies that valley as the day
Down within the golden east —
All things lovely — are not they
Far away — far away?

It is called the valley Nis.
And a Syriac tale there is
Thereabout which Time hath said
Shall not be interpreted.
Something about Satan's dart —
Something about angel wings —
Much about a broken heart —
All about unhappy things:
But "the valley Nis" at best
Means "the valley of unrest."
Once it smil'd a silent dell
Where the people did not dwell,
Having gone unto the wars —
And the sly, mysterious stars,
With a visage full of meaning,
O'er the unguarded flowers were leaning:
Or the sun ray dripp'd all red
Thro' the tulips overhead,
Then grew paler as it fell
On the quiet Asphodel.

Now the *unhappy* shall confess
Nothing there is motionless:

6 Far away — | One and all, too S. L. M.
24 the | tall S. L. M.

NOTES

Helen, like thy human eye
There th' uneasy violets lie —
There the reedy grass doth wave
Over the old forgotten grave —
One by one from the treetop
There the eternal dew drops —
There the vague and dreamy trees
Do roll like seas in northern breeze
Around the stormy Hebrides —
There the gorgeous clouds do fly,
Rustling everlastingly,
Through the terror-stricken sky,
Rolling like a waterfall
O'er the horizon's fiery wall —
There the moon doth shine by night
With a most unsteady light —
There the sun doth reel by day
“Over the hills and far away.”

27-46 Now each visiter shall confess
Nothing there is motionless:
Nothing save the airs that brood
O'er the enchanted solitude,
Save the airs with pinions furled
That slumber o'er that valley-world.
No wind in Heaven, and lo! the trees
Do roll like seas, in Northern breeze,
Around the stormy Hebrides —
No wind in Heaven, and clouds do fly,
Rustling everlastingly,
Through the terror-stricken sky,
Rolling, like a waterfall,
O'er th' horizon's fiery wall —
And Helen, like thy human eye,
Low crouched on Earth, some violets lie,

NOTES

THE CITY IN THE SEA

The City in the Sea. "American Whig Review" (sub-title, *A Prophecy*), April, 1845; 1845; "Broadway Journal," ii. 8 | *The Doomed City.* 1831; *The City of Sin.* "Southern Literary Messenger," August, 1836.

TEXT. 1845. Other readings:—

3 *Far off in a region unblest* Am. W. R.

25 *Around the mournful waters lie* "

28-35 omit Am. W. R.

36 *For no* | *No murmuring* Am. W. R.

39 *Some* | *a* Am. W. R.

41 *Seas less hideously* | *oceans not so sad* Am.
W. R.

The first version is 1831, as follows, other early readings being noted below:—

THE DOOMED CITY

Lo! Death hath rear'd himself a throne

In a strange city, all alone,

Far down within the dim west—

And the good, and the bad, and the worst, and the best,

Have gone to their eternal rest.

And, nearer Heaven, some lilies wave

All banner-like, above a *grave*.

And one by one, from out their tops

Eternal dews come down in drops,

Ah, one by one, from off their stems

Eternal dews come down in gems!

S. L. M.

4 *And* | *Where* S. L. M.

NOTES

There shrines and palaces and towers
Are — not like anything of ours —
O! no — O! no — *ours* never loom
To heaven with that ungodly gloom!
Time-eaten towers that tremble not!
Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
A heaven that God doth not condemn
With stars is like a diadem
We liken our ladies' eyes to them —
But there! That everlasting pall!
It would be mockery to call
Such dreariness a heaven at all.

Yet tho' no holy rays come down
On the long night-time of that town,
Light from the lurid, deep sea
Streams up the turrets silently —
Up thrones — up long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptur'd ivy and stone flowers —
Up domes — up spires — up kingly halls —
Up fanes — up Babylon-like walls —
Up many a melancholy shrine
Whose entablatures intertwine
The mask — the viol — and the vine.

There open temples — open graves
Are on a level with the waves —
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye,
Not the gayly-jewell'd dead

14-19 omit S. L. M.

20 *No holy rays from heaven come down* S. L. M.

22 *But light from out the lurid sea.* S. L. M.

NOTES

Tempt the waters from their bed:
For no ripples curl, alas!
Along that wilderness of glass —
No swellings hint that winds may be
Upon a far-off happier sea:
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,
While from the high towers of the town
Death looks gigantically down.

But lo! a stir is in the air!
The wave! there is a ripple there!
As if the towers had thrown aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide —
As if the turret-tops had given
A vacuum in the filmy Heaven:
The waves have now a redder glow —
The very hours are breathing low —
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence,
And Death to some more happy clime
Shall give his undivided time.

TO ZANTE

To Zante. "Southern Literary Messenger," January, 1837; Philadelphia "Saturday Museum," March 4, 1843; 1845; "Broadway Journal," ii. 2.

TEXT. "Southern Literary Messenger."

NOTE. CHATEAUBRIAND. *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem*, p. 15. Je souseris à ses noms d'Isola

NOTES

d'oro, de Fior di Levante. Ce nom de fleur me rappelle que l'hyacinthe étoit originaire de l'île de Zante, et que cette île reçut son nom de la plante qu'elle avoit portée.

SILENCE

Silence. "Burton's Gentleman's Magazine," April, 1840; Philadelphia "Saturday Museum," March 4, 1843; 1845; "Broadway Journal," ii. 3.

TEXT. 1845. Other readings:—

2 *which thus is* | *life aptly* B. M.; S. M.

3 *A* | *The* B. M.; S. M.

THE COLISEUM

The Coliseum. The Baltimore "Saturday Visiter," 1833; "Southern Literary Messenger," August, 1835; Philadelphia "Saturday Evening Post," June 12, 1841; Philadelphia "Saturday Museum," March 4, 1843; 1845; "Broadway Journal," ii. 1.

TEXT. 1845. No copy of the first issue is known.

Other readings:—

11 Insert after:—

Gaunt vestibules and phantom-peopled aisles
S. L. M.

20 *gilded* | *yellow* S. L. M.

21 Insert after:—

Here where on ivory couch the Cæsar sate
On bed of moss lies gloating the foul adder
S. L. M.

26 *But stay — these* | *these crumbling; ivy-clad* |
tottering S. L. M.

28 *crumbling* | *broken* S. L. M.

31 *famed* | *great* S. L. M.

NOTES

36 *melody* | *in old days* S. L. M.

39 *impotent* | *desolate* S. L. M.

NOTES. This was the poem offered for the Baltimore prize. See *Memoir*.

HYMN

Hymn. "Southern Literary Magazine," April, 1835 [Morella]; "Burton's Gentleman's Magazine," November, 1839 [Morella]; "Tales of the Arabesque and Grotesque" 1840 [Morella]; 1845; "Broadway Journal," i. 19 and 25 [Morella], ii. 6.

TEXT. 1845. Other readings:—

1 Insert before:—

Sancta Maria! turn thine eyes
Upon the sinner's sacrifice
Of fervent prayer and humble love
From thy holy throne above.

S. L. M.; 1840; B. G. M. (except

2 *the* | *a* B. G. M.; 1840).

5 *the* | *my; brightly | gently* S. L. M.; B. G. M.

6 *not a cloud obscured* | *no storms were in*
S. L. M.; B. G. M.

8 *grace* | *love* S. L. M.; B. G. M.

9 *storms* | *clouds* S. L. M.; B. G. M.

10 *Darkly* | *All* S. L. M.; B. G. M.

ISRAFEL

Israfel. 1831; "Southern Literary Messenger," August, 1836; "Graham's Magazine," October, 1841; Philadelphia "Saturday Museum," March 4, 1843; 1845; "Broadway Journal," ii. 3.

POEMS

TEXT. 1845. Other readings:—

iv. 3 *Where* | *And* S. M.; B. J.

iv. 4 *Where* | *And* S. M.; B. J.

v. 1 *Thou art not, therefore* S. M.; B. J.

The first version is 1831, as follows, other early readings being noted below:—

ISRAFEL ¹

I

IN Heaven a spirit doth dwell
Whose heart-strings are a lute;
None sing so wild — so well
As the angel Israfel —
And the giddy stars are mute.

II

Tottering above
In her highest noon,
The enamoured moon
Blushes with love —
While, to listen, the red levin
Pauses in Heaven.

III

And they say (the starry choir
And all the listening things)
That Israfeli's fire
Is owing to that lyre
With those unusual strings.

III. 4 *owing to* | *due unto* G. M.

¹ And the angel Israfel, who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures. — *Koran*.

NOTES

IV

But the Heavens that angel trod,
Where deep thoughts are a duty —
Where Love is a grown god —
Where Houri glances are —
Stay! turn thine eyes afar!
Imbued with all the beauty
Which we worship in yon star.

V

Thou art not, therefore, wrong
Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassion'd song:
To thee the laurels belong,
Best bard, — because the wisest.

VI

The extacies above
With thy burning measures suit —
Thy grief — if any — thy love
With the fervor of thy lute —
Well may the stars be mute!

VII

Yes, Heaven is thine: but this
Is a world of sweets and sour:
Our flowers are merely — flowers,
And the shadow of thy bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I did dwell where Israfel
Hath dwelt, and he where I,

NOTES

He would not sing one half as well —
One half as passionately,
While a stormier note than this would swell
From my lyre within the sky.

NOTES. The motto of the poem was derived by Poe from Moore's "Lalla Rookh," where it is correctly attributed to Sale (Preliminary Discourse, iv. 71). The phrase, "whose heart-strings are a lute," was interpolated by Poe, as in the text.

THE HAUNTED PALACE

The Haunted Palace. Baltimore "Museum," April, 1839; "Burton's Gentleman's Magazine" [The Fall of the House of Usher], September, 1839; Tales [the same] 1840; Philadelphia "Saturday Museum," March 4, 1843; 1845; Tales, 1845 [The Fall of the House of Usher].

TEXT. Philadelphia "Saturday Museum." Other readings: —

I. 4 *radiant* | *snow-white* B. M.; 1840; B.
G. M.

III. 1 *all wanderers* B. M.
8 *ruler* | *sovereign* B. M.; B. G. M.

IV. 5 *sweet* | *sole* B. G. M.

VI. 5 *ghastly rapid* | *rapid ghastly*; B. M.; B. G.
M.; 1840; Tales, 1845.

VIII. 4 *as* | *so* G. M.

6 *While a stormier* | *And a loftier* S. L. M.;
G. M.

NOTES

THE CONQUEROR WORM

The Conqueror Worm. "Graham's Magazine," January, 1843; Philadelphia "Saturday Museum," March 4, 1843; 1845; "Broadway Journal," i. 21; ii. 12 [*Ligeia*].

TEXT. 1845. Lorimer Graham copy. Other readings:

- I. 3 *An angel* | *A mystic* G. M.; S. M.; B. J.
- II. 5 *formless* | *shadowy* G. M.
- IV. 7 *seraphs* | *the angels* all other editions.
- V. 2 *quivering* | *dying* G. M.; B. J.
 - 5 *While* | *And* all editions; *angels* | *seraphs* G. M.; *pallid* | *haggard* G. M.
 - 8 *And* omit G. M.; S. M.; B. J.

ELDORADO

Eldorado. Flag of our Union. April 21, 1849.

TEXT. Flag of Our Union.

EULALIE

Eulalie. "American Whig Review" (sub-title, *A Song*) July, 1845; 1845; "Broadway Journal," ii. 5.

TEXT. "Broadway Journal." Other readings:—

- II. 6 *morn-tints* A. W. R.
- III. 4 *And* | *While* A. W. R.
 - 9 *While* | *And* A. W. R.
 - 10 *While* | *And* A. W. R.

THE BELLS

The Bells. "Sartain's Union Magazine," November, 1849.

TEXT. "Sartain's Union Magazine." An account of a draft and a manuscript is given below.

NOTES

NOTES. "Sartain's Union Magazine," December, 1849.

"The singular poem of Mr. Poe's, called 'The Bells,' which we published in our last number, has been very extensively copied. There is a curious piece of literary history connected with this poem, which we may as well give now as at any other time. It illustrates the gradual development of an idea in the mind of a man of original genius. This poem came into our possession about a year since. It then consisted of *eighteen lines!* They were as follows:

"THE BELLS. — A SONG

"THE bells! — hear the bells!
The merry wedding bells!
The little silver bells!

How fairy-like a melody there swells
From the silver tinkling cells
Of the bells, bells, bells!
Of the bells!

"The bells! — ah, the bells!
The heavy iron bells!
Hear the tolling of the bells!
Hear the knells!

How horrible a monody there floats
From their throats —
From their deep-toned throats!
How I shudder at the notes
From the melancholy throats
Of the bells, bells, bells!
Of the bells!

"About six months after this we received the poem enlarged and altered nearly to its present size and

NOTES

form; and about three months since, the author sent another alteration and enlargement, in which condition the poem was left at the time of his death."

Gill, "Life of Poe," p. 207: —

"The original MS. of 'The Bells,' in its enlarged form, from which the draft sent to 'Sartain's' was made, is in our possession at this time.

"In the twelfth line of the first stanza of the original draft, the word 'bells' was repeated *five* times, instead of four, as Poe printed it, and but twice in the next line. In changing and obviously improving the effect, he has drawn his pen through the fifth repetition, and added another, *underlined*, to the two of the next line. The same change is made in the corresponding lines in the next stanza. In the sixth line of the third stanza, the word 'much' is placed before 'too' with the usual mark indicating the transposition which he made in printing it, and, as originally written, the word 'anger,' in the fifth line from the last in this stanza, was written 'clamor,' while 'anger' was placed in the last line. . . . In the sixth line of the fourth stanza, the word 'meaning' was first used in lieu of the more impressive 'menace,' to which it gave place. The eighth line of this stanza was first written, 'From out their ghostly throats;' and the eleventh line was changed twice, reading first, 'Who live up in the steeple,' then 'They that sleep' was substituted for 'who live,' and finally 'dwell' was printed instead of 'sleep.' After the eighteenth line, a line was added that was elided entirely in the poem as printed. It read, —

"'But are pestilential carcasses departed from their souls.'

NOTES

“ . . . In making the change, omitting this line, he simply substituted, ‘They are ghouls,’ in the next line, in pencil.”

Ingram, “Life of Poe,” ii. 155–156: —

“It was shortly after this, during the summer, that Poe wrote the first rough draft of ‘The Bells,’ and at Mrs. Shew’s residence. ‘One day he came in,’ she records [in her diary], ‘and said, “Marie Louise, I have to write a poem; I have no feeling, no sentiment, no inspiration.”’ His hostess persuaded him to have some tea. It was served in the conservatory, the windows of which were open, and admitted the sound of neighboring church bells. Mrs. Shew said, playfully, ‘Here is paper;’ but the poet, declining it, declared, ‘I so dislike the noise of bells to-night, I cannot write. I have no subject — I am exhausted.’ The lady then took up the pen, and, pretending to mimic his style, wrote, ‘The Bells, by E. A. Poe;’ and then, in pure sportiveness, ‘The Bells, the little silver Bells,’ Poe finishing off the stanza. She then suggested for the next verse, ‘The heavy iron Bells;’ and this Poe also expanded into a stanza. He next copied out the complete poem, and headed it, ‘By Mrs. M. L. Shew,’ remarking that it was her poem, as she had suggested and composed so much of it. Mrs. Shew continues, ‘My brother came in, and I sent him to Mrs. Clemm to tell her that “her boy would stay in town, and was well.” My brother took Mr. Poe to his own room, where he slept twelve hours, and could hardly recall the evening’s work.’”

Chateaubriand. *Génie du Christianisme*, ii. 261.

“Il nous semble que si nous étions poète, nous ne dédaignerions point cette cloche agitée par les fantômes

NOTES

dans la vieille chapelle de la forêt, ni celle qu'une religieuse frayer balançoit dans nos campagnes pour écarter le tonnerre, ni celle qu'on sonnoit la nuit, dans certains ports de mer, pour diriger le pilote à travers les écueils. Les carillons des cloches, au milieu de nos fêtes, sembloient augmenter l'allégresse publique; dans des calamités, au contraire, ces mêmes bruits devenoient terribles. Les cheveux dressent encore sur la tête au souvenir de ces jours de meurtre et de feu, retentissant des clameurs du tocsin. Qui de nous a perdu la mémoire de ces hurlements, de ces cris aigus, entrecoupés de silences, durant lesquels on distinguoit de rares coups de fusil, quelque voix lamentable et solitaire, et surtout le bourdonnement de la cloche d'alarme, ou le son de l'horologe qui frappoit tranquillement l'heure écoulée?"

ANNABEL LEE

Annabel Lee. New York "Tribune," Oct. 9, 1849;
 "Southern Literary Messenger," November, 1849;
 "Sartain's Union Magazine," January, 1850.

TEXT. "Tribune." Other readings:—

II. 1 *I . . . She | She . . . I* S. L. M.; S. U. M.

III. 5 *kinsman* S. U. M.

VI. 8 *sounding | side of the* S. L. M.

ULALUME

Ulalume. "American Whig Review" (sub-title, *To*
 ————), December, 1847; "Home Journal,"
 Jan. 1, 1848; Literary World, March 3, 1849;
 Griswold, 1850.

TEXT. Griswold, 1850. Other readings:—

III. 9 *We remembered* Am. W. R.; H. J.

VIII. 5 *But | And* Am. W. R.; H. J.

IX. 13 *This | In the* Am. W. R.; H. J.

NOTES

Insert after: —

Said *we*, then — the two, then — “Ah, can it
Have been that the woodlandish ghouls
The pitiful, the merciless ghouls —
To bar up our way and to ban it
From the secret that lies in these wolds —
From the thing that lies hidden in these wolds —
Had drawn up the spectre of a planet
From the limbo of lunary souls
This sinfully scintillant planet
From the Hell of the planetary souls.

Am. W. R.: H. J.

NOTES. “Home Journal,” Jan. 1, 1848.

“We do not know how many readers we have who will enjoy, as we do, the following exquisitely piquant and skilful exercise of variety and niceness of language. It is a poem which we find in the ‘American Review,’ full of beauty and oddity in sentiment and versification, but a curiosity (and a delicious one we think) in philologic flavor. Who is the author?” Poe had requested Willis to ask the question (Poe to Willis. Dec. 8, 1847).

SCENES FROM POLITIAN

Scenes from Politian. “Southern Literary Messenger,” December, 1835, January, 1836; 1845.

TEXT. 1845. Other readings, S. L. M.: —

II. 99 *This sacred | A vow — a*

III. 6 *Surely | I live —*

57 *Eloquent | voice — that*

58 *I surely*

63 *it | that lattice*

101 *Believe me | Baldazzar! Oh!*

NOTES

- IV. 5 *sob* || *weep*
 6 *mourn* || *weep*
 9 *turn here thine eyes* | *and listen to me*
 30 *to me* || *speak not*
- V. 7 *Perish'd Hope* | *hopes* — *give me to live*
 44 Insert after: —
 If that we meet at all it were as well
 That I should meet him in the Vatican —
 In the Vatican — within the holy walls
 Of the Vatican.
 58 *then at none* | — *have at thee then*
 62 *thy sacred* | *hold off thy*
 63 *indeed I dare not* | *I dare not, dare not.*
 65 Insert after: —
 succeeding well! — *thou dar'est not fight*
 with me?
 70 Insert after: —
 Thou dar'est not!
 71 *my lord* || *alas!*
 73 *the veriest* || — *I am — a*
 92 *Thou hast* | *By God; indeed* | — *now this*

TO HELEN

To Helen. 1831: "Southern Literary Messenger,"
 March, 1836: "Graham's Magazine," September,
 1841: Philadelphia "Saturday Museum," March
 4, 1843; 1845.

TEXT. Philadelphia "Saturday Museum." Other
 readings: —

II. 4 *glory that was* | *beauty of fair* 1831;
 S. L. M.

5 *that was* | *of old* 1831; S. L. M.

III. 1 *you brilliant* | *that little* 1831; S. L. M.;
 shadowy G. M.

NOTES

3 *agate lamp* | *folded scroll* 1831; S. L. M.;
G. M.

4 *Ah* | *A* 1831.

TO F——

To F——. 1845. "Broadway Journal," i. 17 | *To Mary*. "Southern Literary Messenger," July, 1835. *To One Departed*. "Graham's Magazine," March, 1842; Philadelphia "Saturday Museum," March 4, 1843.

TEXT, 1845. Other readings:—

I. 1 *Mary amid the cares — the woes* S. L. M.
For 'mid the earnest cares and woes G. M.;
S. M.

2 *That crowd* | *crowding* S. L. M.

3 *Drear* | *Sad* S. L. M.; G. M.; S. M.

7 *bland* | *sweet* S. L. M.

II. 1 *And thus* | *Seraph* G. M.; S. M.

4 *Some lake beset as lake can be* S. L. M.
throbbing far and free | *vexed as it may be*
G. M.; S. M.

G. M. and S. M. reverse the order of the stanzas.

NOTES. "F——" is, presumably, Mrs. Frances Sargent Osgood. See *Memoir*.

TO ONE IN PARADISE

To One in Paradise. Philadelphia "Saturday Museum," March 4, 1843; 1845; | " [Godey's] Lady's Book" [The Visionary], January, 1834; "Southern Literary Messenger" [The Visionary], July, 1835; "Tales of the Arabesque and Grotesque" [The Visionary], 1840; "Broadway Journal," i. 19, i. 23 [The Assignation]. | *To*

NOTES

Ianthe in Heaven. "Burton's Gentleman's Magazine," July, 1839.

TEXT. 1845. Lorimer Graham copy.

1. 1 *all that* | *that all* all other editions.
 5 *with fairy fruits and* | *round with wild*
 Go. *around about with* S. L. M.; B. G. M.;
 1840.
- 6 *all the flowers* | *the flowers — they all* S. L.
 M.; B. G. M.; 1840.
- II. 1 *But the dream — it could not last* Go.; S. L.
 M.; B. G. M.; 1840.
- 2 *Young Hope! thou didst arise* Go.; *And*
 the star of Hope did rise. S. L. M.; B. G.
 M.; 1840.
- Ah* | *Oh!* S. M.
5. "*On! on*" — *but* | "*Onward*" Go.; S. L.
 M.; B. G. M.; 1840; B. J.; *but* | *while* Go.;
 S. L. M.; B. G. M.; 1840.
- III. 2 *Ambition — all — is o'er* Go.; S. L. M.; B.
 G. M.; 1840.
- 4 *solemn* | *breaking* Go.
- IV. 1 *days* | *hours* Go.; S. L. M.; B. G. M.; 1840;
 And | *Now* B. J.
- 3 *grey* | *dark* all other editions.
- 6 *eternal* | *Italian* Go.; S. L. M.; 1840; B. J.;
 what | *far* Go.

Insert after:—

Alas! for that accursed time
 They bore thee o'er the billow,
 From Love to titled age and crime
 And an unholy pillow —
 From me, and from our misty clime
 Where weeps the silver willow.

S. L. M.; 1840; Go. except

NOTES

3 *Love* | *me*

5 *me* | *Love*

A correspondent of the London "Spectator," Jan. 1, 1853, contributed a version from a manuscript long in his possession. It was reprinted in the New York "Literary World," Feb. 5, 1853. It is the same as that of the "Southern Literary Messenger," except

I. 1 *that* omit

II. 2 *And the star of life did rise*

3 *But* | *Only*

III. 1-5 Like the murmur of the solemn sea

To sands on the sea-shore

A voice is whispering unto me

"The day is past," and nevermore

IV. 1 *And all mine hours*

2 *nightly* | *nights are*

3 *Are* | *Of*

5-6 In the maze of flashing dances

By the slow Italian streams.

The correspondent had supposed the lines to be by Tennyson, and charged Poe with plagiarism. Tennyson, under date of Jan. 20, 1853, wrote to the "Spectator" to correct the statement and cleared Poe of the charge. The incident led an American correspondent to send to the "Literary World" a copy of the first version from "Godey's Lady's Book," and the text of Godey given above is here printed from that source.

TO F — S S. O — D

To F — s S. O — d [Frances S. Osgood]. 1845; |
Lines written in an Album. "Southern Literary
 Messenger," September, 1835. *To —.* "Bur-

NOTES

ton's Gentleman's Magazine," August, 1839. To
F——. "Broadway Journal," ii. 10, lines 1–4.

TEXT. 1845. Other readings:—

- 1 *Eliza, let thy generous heart* S. L. M.
- Fair maiden, let thy generous heart* B. G. M.
- 6 *grace, thy more than | unassuming* S. L. M.;
- B. G. M.
- 7 *shall be an endless | And truth shall be a* S. L.
- M.; *Thy truth — shall be a* B. G. M.
- 8 *Forever — and love a duty* S. L. M.; B. G. M.

NOTES. "Eliza" was the young daughter of Mr. White, editor of the "Messenger." For Mrs. Osgood see *Memoir*.

A VALENTINE

A Valentine. "Sartain's Union Magazine," March, 1849; "Flag of our Union," March 3, 1849.

TEXT. "Sartain's Union Magazine." Other readings:—

- 1 *this rhyme is | these lines are* F. U.
- 4 *the | this* F. U.
- 5 *the lines! they hold | this rhyme, which holds*
- F. U.
- 8 *syllables | letters themselves* F. U.
- 12 *comprehend | understand* F. U.
- 13 *the leaf where now | this page whereon* F. U.
- 14 *Such eager eyes, there lies, I say perdu,* F. U.
- 15 *Three eloquent words | A well-known name*
- F. U.

NOTES. To find the name, read the first letter in the first line, the second in the second, and so on.

NOTES

AN ENIGMA

An Enigma. | *Sonnet.* "Union Magazine." March, 1848.

TEXT. "Union Magazine."

NOTES. To find the name, read as in the preceding poem.

10 *Tuckermanities* | *Petrarchmanities* U. M.

TO HELEN

To Helen. | *To* — — — — "Union Magazine," November, 1848.

TEXT. Griswold.

26-28 *O Heaven . . . me* omit S. U. M.

NOTES. "Helen" was Mrs. Whitman; see *Memoir*, and compare "The Raven" in her poems.

TO —

To — (I heed not that my earthly lot). | *Alone*, MS.; *To M* —. 1829.

TEXT. Griswold. Other readings, 1829, the variations from it of the Wilmer MS. being noted.

1 *I heed* | *O! I care* MS.

4 *Hatred* | *fever* MS.

5 *mourn* | *heed* MS.

7 *sorrow for* | *meddle with* MS.

8 Insert after:—

It is not that my founts of bliss
Are gushing—strange! with tears—
Or that the thrill of a single kiss
Hath palsied many years—

'T is not that the flowers of twenty springs
Which have wither'd as they rose
Lie dead on my heart-strings
With the weight of an age of snows.

NOTES

Nor that the grass — O! 'may it thrive!
On my grave is growing or grown —
But that, while I am dead yet alive
I cannot be, lady, alone.

The MS. gives the following variations from the above:

- 9 *It is not* | *I heed not*
10 *Are gushing* | *Be gushing, oh!*
11 *Or that the thrill of a single* | *That the tremor*
 of one
19 *yet* | *and*
20 *lady* | *love*

TO M. L. S——

To M. L. S——. “Home Journal,” March 13, 1847.

TEXT. “Home Journal.”

NOTES. Introduced in the “Home Journal” by the following editorial note: “The following seems said over a hand clasped in the speaker’s two. It is by Edgar A. Poe, and is evidently the pouring out of a very deep feeling of gratitude.” “M. L. S.” was Mrs. Shew; see *Memoir*.

TO —— —

To ——. “Columbian Magazine,” March, 1848.

TEXT. Griswold. Other readings:—

The original publication, which is identified by an index number of the magazine only, has not been found. The following manuscript variation exists in facsimile. The first seven lines show no variation. The poem then continues:—

NOTES

TO MARIE LOUISE

Two gentle sounds made only to be murmured
By angels dreaming in the moon-lit "dew
That hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill "
Have stirred from out the abysses of his heart
Unthought-like thoughts—scarcely the shades of
thought —

Bewildering fantasies — far richer visions
Than even the seraph harper, Israfil,
Who "had the sweetest voice of all God's creatures,"
Would hope to utter. Ah, Marie Louise!
In deep humility I own that now
All pride — all thought of power — all hope of fame —
All wish for Heaven — is merged forevermore
Beneath the palpitating tide of passion
Heaped o'er my soul by thee. Its spells are broken —
The pen falls powerless from my shivering hand —
With that dear name as text I *cannot* write —
I cannot speak — I cannot even think —
Alas! I cannot feel; for 't is *not* feeling —
This standing motionless upon the golden
Threshold of the wide-open gate of Dreams,
Gazing, entranced, adown the gorgeous vista,
And thrilling as I see upon the right —
Upon the left — and all the way along,
Amid the clouds of glory: far away
To where the prospect terminates — *thee only*.

NOTES. "Marie Louise" was Mrs. Shew; see *Memoir*.

FOR ANNIE

For Annie. "Flag of our Union," April 28, 1849;
Griswold, 1850.

TEXT. Griswold. No file of the paper is known.

NOTES. "Annie" was Mrs. Richmond of Lowell, Mass.

NOTES

TO MY MOTHER

To My Mother. "Flag of our Union," July 7, 1849;
Southern Literary Messenger, December, 1849;
Leaflets of Memory, 1850.

TEXT. "Flag of our Union." Other readings:—

1 *I feel that | the angels* S. L. M.; L. M.

2 *The angels whispering to | Devoutly singing*
unto S. L. M.; L. M.

3 *among | amid* S. L. M.; L. M.

5 *dear | sweet* S. L. M.; L. M.

7 *And fill; death | Filling; God* S. L. M.; L. M.

11 *one | dead* S. L. M.; L. M.

12 *Are thus more precious than the one I knew*
S. L. M.; L. M.

NOTES. His mother-in-law, Mrs. Clemm.

TAMERLANE

Tamerlane. 1827, 1829, 1831, 1845.

TEXT. 1845. Other readings:—

The first version is 1827, as follows, the variations
of the Wilmer MS. being noted below:—

TAMERLANE

I

I HAVE sent for thee, holy friar;(1)
But 't was not with the drunken hope,
Which is but agony of desire
To shun the fate, with which to cope
Is more than crime may dare to dream,
That I have call'd thee at this hour:
Such, father, is not my theme—
Nor am I mad, to deem that power
Of earth may shrive me of the sin

NOTES

Unearthly pride hath revell'd in —
I would not call thee fool, old man,
But hope is not a gift of thine;
If I *can* hope (O God! I can)
It falls from an eternal shrine.

II

The gay wall of this gaudy tower
Grows dim around me — death is near.
I had not thought, until this hour
When passing from the earth, that ear
Of any, were it not the shade
Of one whom in life I made
All mystery but a simple name,
Might know the secret of a spirit
Bow'd down in sorrow, and in shame. —
Shame, said'st thou?

Ay, I did inherit
That hated portion, with the fame,
The worldly glory, which has shown
A demon-light around my throne,
Scorching my sear'd heart with a pain
Not Hell shall make me fear again.

III

I have not always been as now —
The fever'd diadem on my brow
I claim'd and won usurpingly —
Ay — the same heritage hath given
Rome to the Cæsar — this to me;
The heirdom of a kingly mind —
And a proud spirit, which hath striven
Triumphantly with human kind.

NOTES

In mountain air I first drew life;
The mists of the Taglay have shed (²)
Nightly their dews on my young head;
And my brain drank their venom then,
When after day of perilous strife
With chamois, I would seize his den
And slumber, in my pride of power,
The infant monarch of the hour —
For, with the mountain dew by night,
My soul imbibed unhallow'd feeling;
And I would feel its essence stealing
In dreams upon me — while the light
Flashing from cloud that hover'd o'er,
Would seem to my half-closing eye
The pageantry of monarchy!
And the deep thunder's echoing roar
Came hurriedly upon me, telling
Of war, and tumult, where my voice,
My *own* voice, silly child! was swelling
(O how would my wild heart rejoice
And leap within me at the cry)
The battle-cry of victory!

.

IV

The rain came down upon my head
But barely shelter'd — and the wind
Pass'd quickly o'er me — but my mind
Was maddening — for 't was man that shed
Laurels upon me — and the rush,
The torrent of the chilly air
Gurgled in my pleased ear the crush
Of empires, with the captive's prayer,
The hum of suitors, the mix'd tone
Of flattery round a sovereign's throne.

NOTES

The storm had ceased — and I awoke —
 Its spirit cradled me to sleep,
 And as it pass'd me by, there broke
 Strange light upon me, tho' it were
 My soul in mystery to steep:
 For I was not as I had been;
 The child of Nature, without care,
 Or thought, save of the passing scene. —

V

My passions, from that hapless hour,
 Usurp'd a tyranny, which men
 Have deem'd, since I have reach'd to power,
 My innate nature — be it so:
 But, father, there lived one who, then —
 Then, in my boyhood, when their fire
 Burn'd with a still intenser glow;
 (For passion must with youth expire)
 Even *then*, who deem'd this iron heart
 In woman's weakness had a part.

I have no words, alas! to tell
 The loveliness of loving well!
 Nor would I dare attempt to trace
 The breathing beauty of a face,
 Which even to *my* impassion'd mind,
 Leaves not its memory behind.
 In spring of life have ye ne'er dwelt
 Some object of delight upon,
 With steadfast eye, till ye have felt
 The earth reel — and the vision gone?
 And I have held to memory's eye

V. 14 *breathing* | *more than* MS.

15 *my* | *this* MS.

21 *And I have* | *So have I* MS.

NOTES

One object — and but one — until
Its very form hath pass'd me by,
But left its influence with me still.

VI

'Tis not to thee that I should name —
Thou canst not — wouldst not dare to think
The magic empire of a flame
Which even upon this perilous brink
Hath fix'd my soul, tho' unforgiven,
By what it lost for passion — Heaven.
I loved — and O, how tenderly!
Yes! she [was] worthy of all love!
Such as in infancy was mine,
Tho' then its *passion* could not be:
'T was such as angel minds above
Might envy — her young heart the shrine
On which my every hope and thought
Were incense — then a goodly gift —
For they were childish, without sin,
Pure as her young example taught;
Why did I leave it and adrift,
Trust to the fickle star within?

VII

We grew in age and love together,
Roaming the forest and the wild;
My breast her shield in wintry weather,
And when the friendly sunshine smiled
And she would mark the opening skies,
I saw no Heaven but in her eyes —
Even childhood knows the human heart;
For when, in sunshine and in smiles,
From all our little cares apart,

NOTES

Laughing at her half silly wiles,
I'd throw me on her throbbing breast,
And pour my spirit out in tears,
She'd look up in my wilder'd eye —
There was no need to speak the rest —
No need to quiet her kind fears —
She did not ask the reason why.

The hallow'd memory of those years
Comes o'er me in these lonely hours,
And, with sweet loveliness, appears
As perfume of strange summer flowers;
Of flowers which we have known before
In infancy, which seen, recall
To mind — not flowers alone — but more,
Our earthly life, and love — and all.

VIII

Yes! she was worthy of all love!
Even such as from the accursed time
My spirit with the tempest strove,
When on the mountain peak alone,
Ambition lent it a new tone,
And bade it first to dream of crime,
My frenzy to her bosom taught:
We still were young: no purer thought
Dwelt in a seraph's breast than *thine*; (³)
For passionate love is still divine:
I loved her as an angel might

VIII. 1 *Such as I taught her from the time* MS.

7-10 *There were no holier thoughts than thine*
MS.

11 *her | thee* MS.

NOTES

With ray of the all living light
 Which blazes upon Edis' shrine. (4)
 It is not surely sin to name,
 With such as mine — that mystic flame,
 I had no being but in thee!
 The world with all its train of bright
 And happy beauty (for to me
 All was an undefined delight),
 The world — its joy — its share of pain
 Which I felt not — its bodied forms
 Of varied being, which contain
 The bodiless spirits of the storms,
 The sunshine, and the calm — the ideal
 And fleeting vanities of dreams,
 Fearfully beautiful! the real
 Nothings of mid day waking life —
 Of an enchanted life, which seems,
 Now as I look back, the strife
 Of some ill demon, with a power
 Which left me in an evil hour,
 All that I felt, or saw, or thought,
 Crowding, confused became
 (With thine unearthly beauty fraught)
 Thou — and the nothing of a name.

IX

The passionate spirit which hath known,
 And deeply felt the silent tone
 Of its own self-supremacy, —
 (I speak thus openly to thee,

21 *Which I felt not* | *Unheeded then* MS.

30 *Some* | *an* MS.

33 *confused* | *confusedly* MS.

IX. 4-10 omit MS.

NOTES

'T were folly *now* to veil a thought
 With which this aching breast is fraught)
 The soul which feels its innate right —
 The mystic empire and high power
 Given by the energetic might
 Of Genius, at its natal hour;
 Which knows (believe me at this time,
 When falsehood were a tenfold crime,
 There *is* a power in the high spirit
 To *know* the fate it will inherit)
 The soul, which knows such power, will still
 Find *Pride* the ruler of its will.

Yes! I was proud — and ye who know
 The magic of that meaning word,
 So oft perverted, will bestow
 Your scorn, perhaps, when ye have heard
 That the proud spirit had been broken,
 The proud heart burst in agony
 At one upbraiding word or token
 Of her that heart's idolatry —
 I was ambitious — have ye known
 Its fiery passion? — ye have not —
 A cottager, I mark'd a throne
 Of half the world, as all my own,
 And murmur'd at such lowly lot!
 But it had pass'd me as a dream
 Which, of light step, flies with the dew,
 That kindling thought — did not the beam
 Of Beauty, which did guide it through

11 *me at this time* | *for now on me* MS.

12 *Truth flashes thro' eternity* MS.

15 *knows* | *feels* MS.

26 *Its* | *The* MS.

NOTES

The livelong summer day, oppress
My mind with double loveliness —

.

x

We walk'd together on the crown
Of a high mountain, which look'd down
Afar from its proud natural towers
Of rock and forest, on the hills —
The dwindled hills, whence amid bowers
Her own fair hand had rear'd around,
Gush'd shoutingly a thousand rills,
Which as it were, in fairy bound
Embraced two hamlets — those our own —
Peacefully happy — yet alone —

.

I spoke to her of power and pride —
But mystically, in such guise,
That she might deem it nought beside
The moment's converse; in her eyes
I read (perhaps too carelessly)
A mingled feeling with my own;
The flush on her bright cheek, to me,
Seem'd to become a queenly throne
Too well, that I should let it be
A light in the dark wild, alone.

xi

There — in that hour — a thought came o'er
My mind, it had not known before —

X. 6 *own fair* | *magic* MS.

8-10 Encircling with a glittering bound
Of diamond sunshine and sweet spray
Two mossy huts of the Taglay

NOTES

To leave her while we both were young,—
 To follow my high fate among
 The strife of nations, and redeem
 The idle words, which, as a dream
 Now sounded to her heedless ear—
 I held no doubt—I knew no fear
 Of peril in my wild career;
 To gain an empire, and throw down
 As nuptial dowry—a queen's crown,
 The only feeling which possest,
 With her own image, my fond breast—
 Who, that had known the secret thought
 Of a young peasant's bosom then,
 Had deem'd him, in compassion, aught
 But one, whom fantasy had led
 Astray from reason—Among men
 Ambition is chain'd down—nor fed
 (As in the desert, where the grand,
 The wild, the beautiful, conspire
 With their own breath to fan its fire)
 With thoughts such feeling can command;
 Uncheck'd by sarcasm, and scorn
 Of those, who hardly will conceive

XI. 12-13 The undying hope which now opprest
 A spirit ne'er to be at rest MS.

14 *secret* | *silent* MS.

17 *led* | *thrown* MS.

18 *Astray from reason* | *Her mantle over* MS.

19 *Ambition* | *Lion Ambition; nor fed* | omit MS.

Insert after:—

And crouches to a keeper's hand MS.

20 *As in the desert* | *Not so in deserts* MS.

21 *beautifies* | *terrible* MS.

22 *its* | *his* MS.

NOTES

That any should become "great," born ⁽⁵⁾
In their own sphere — will not believe
That they shall stoop in life to one
Whom daily they are wont to see
Familiarly — whom Fortune's sun
Hath ne'er shone dazzlingly upon,
Lowly — and of their own degree —

XII

I pictured to my fancy's eye
Her silent, deep astonishment,
When, a few fleeting years gone by
(For short the time my high hope lent
To its most desperate intent,)
She might recall in him, whom Fame
Had gilded with a conqueror's name
(With glory — such as might inspire
Perforce, a passing thought of one,
Whom she had deem'd in his own fire
Wither'd and blasted; who had gone
A traitor, violate of the truth
So plighted in his early youth,)
Her own Alexis, who should plight ⁽⁶⁾
The love he plighted *then* — again,
And raise his infancy's delight,
The bride and queen of Tamerlane. —

XIII

One noon of a bright summer's day
I pass'd from out the matted bower
Where in a deep, still slumber lay
My Ada. In that peaceful hour,
A silent gaze was my farewell.
I had no other solace — then

NOTES

To awake her, and a falsehood tell
Of a feign'd journey, were again
To trust the weakness of my heart
To her soft thrilling voice: To part
Thus, haply, while in sleep she dream'd
Of long delight, nor yet had deem'd
Awake, that I had held a thought
Of parting, were with madness fraught;
I knew not woman's heart, alas!
Tho' loved, and loving — let it pass. —

XIV

I went from out the matted bower,
And hurried madly on my way:
And felt, with every flying hour,
That bore me from my home, more gay;
There is of earth an agony
Which, ideal, still may be
The worst ill of mortality.
'T is bliss, in its own reality,
Too real, to *his* breast who lives
Not within himself but gives
A portion of his willing soul
To God, and to the great whole —
To him, whose loving spirit will dwell
With Nature, in her wild paths; tell
Of her wondrous ways, and telling bless
Her overpowering loveliness!
A more than agony to him
Whose failing sight will grow dim
With its own living gaze upon
That loveliness around: the sun —
The blue sky — the misty light
Of the pale cloud therein, whose hue

NOTES

Is grace to its heavenly bed of blue;
 Dim! tho' looking on all bright!
 O God! when the thoughts that may not pass
 Will burst upon him, and alas!
 For the flight on Earth to Fancy given,
 There are no words — unless of Heaven.

xv

.

Look round thee now on Samarcand, (7)
 Is she not queen of earth? her pride
 Above all cities? in her hand
 Their destinies? with all beside
 Of glory, which the world hath known?
 Stands she not proudly and alone?
 And who her sovereign? Timur, he (8)
 Whom the astonish'd earth hath seen,
 With victory, on victory,
 Redoubling age! and more, I ween,
 The Zinghis' yet re-echoing fame. (9)
 And now what has he? what! a name.
 The sound of revelry by night
 Comes o'er me, with the mingled voice
 Of many with a breast as light,
 As if 't were not the dying hour

-
- XV. 6 *proudly* | *nobly* MS.
 8 *earth hath seen* | *people saw* MS.
 9-11 Striding o'er empires haughtily,
 A diademed outlaw,
 More than the Zinghis in his fame. MS.
 12 *what!* | *even* MS.
 16 *the dying* | *their parting* MS.

NOTES

Of one, in whom they did rejoice —
 As in a leader, haply — Power
 Its venom secretly imparts;
 Nothing have I with human hearts.

XVI

When Fortune mark'd me for her own,
 And my proud hopes had reach'd a throne
 (It boots me not, good friar, to tell
 A tale the world but knows too well,
 How by what hidden deeds of might,
 I clamber'd to the tottering height,)
 I still was young; and well I ween
 My spirit what it e'er had been.
 My eyes were still on pomp and power,
 My wilder'd heart was far away
 In valleys of the wild Taglay,
 In mine own Ada's matted bower.
 I dwelt not long in Samarcand
 Ere, in a peasant's lowly guise,
 I sought my long-abandon'd land;
 By sunset did its mountains rise
 In dusky grandeur to my eyes:
 But as I wander'd on the way
 My heart sunk with the sun's ray.
 To him, who still would gaze upon
 The glory of the summer sun,
 There comes, when that sun will from him part,
 A sullen hopelessness of heart.
 That soul will hate the evening mist
 So often lovely, and will list

17 Of | *From* MS.

20 *Nothing have I* | *And I have naught* MS.

NOTES

To the sound of the coming darkness (known
To those whose spirits hearken) [¹⁰] as one
Who in a dream of night *would* fly,
But cannot, from a danger nigh.
What though the moon — the silvery moon —
Shine on his path, in her high noon;
Her smile is chilly, and *her* beam
In that time of dreariness will seem
As the portrait of one after death;
A likeness taken when the breath
Of young life, and the fire o' the eye,
Had lately been, but had pass'd by.
'T is thus when the lovely summer sun
Of our boyhood, his course hath run:
For all we live to know — is known;
And all we seek to keep — hath flown;
With the noonday beauty, which is all.
Let life, then, as the day-flower, fall —
The transient, passionate day-flower, (¹¹)
Withering at the evening hour.

XVII

I reach'd my home — my home no more —
For all was flown that made it so —
I pass'd from out its mossy door,
In vacant idleness of woe.
There met me on its threshold stone
A mountain hunter, I had known
In childhood, but he knew me not.
Something he spoke of the old cot:
It had seen better days, he said;
There rose a fountain once, and *there*
Full many a fair flower raised its head:
But she who rear'd them was long dead,

NOTES

And in such follies had no part,
 What was there left me *now?* despair —
 A kingdom for a broken — heart.

Readings varying from 1845, in 1829, 1831: —

3 *deem* | *think* 1831

26 Insert after: —

Despair, the fabled vampire-bat,
 Hath long upon my bosom sat,
 And I would rave, but that he flings
 A calm from his unearthly wings. 1831

30 *fierce* | omit 1831

40 *Have* | *Hath* 1831

57 *Was giant-like* — *so thou my wind* 1829, 1831

73 *this iron heart* | *that as infinite* 1831

74 *My soul* — *so was the weakness in it* 1831

Insert after: —

For in those days it was my lot
 To haunt of the wide world a spot
 The which I could not love the less.
 So lovely was the loneliness
 Of a wild lake with black rock bound,
 And the sultan like pines that tower'd around!
 But when the night had thrown her pall
 Upon that spot as upon all,
 And the black wind murmur'd by,
 In a dirge of melody;
 My infant spirit would awake
 To the terror of that lone lake.
 Yet that terror was not fright —
 But a tremulous delight —
 A feeling not the jewell'd mine
 Could ever bribe me to define,

NOTES

Nor love, Ada! tho' it were thine.
 How could I from that water bring
 Solace to my imagining?
 My solitary soul — how make
 An Eden of that dim lake?

But then a gentler, calmer spell
 Like moonlight on my spirit fell,
 But O! I have no words to tell 1831

- 77 *Nor would I | I will not* 1831
 81 *Thus I | I well* 1831
 82 *Some page | Pages* 1831
 83 *Oh, she was | Was she not* 1831
 106 *throw me on her throbbing | lean upon her gentle*
 1831
 110 *her | her's* 1831
 112-115 omit 1831
 119 *Its joy — its little lot | Of pleasure or* 1831
 120 *That was new pleasure | The good, the bad* 1831
 128-138 omit 1831
 151 *on her bright | upon her* 1831
 152 *to become | fitted for* 1831
 164 *his | its* 1831
 166-177

.

Say, holy father, breathes there yet
 A rebel or a Bajazet?
 How now! why tremble, man of gloom,
 As if my words were the Simoom!
 Why do the people bow the knee,
 To the young Tamerlane — to me! 1831

- 202 *splendor | beauty* 1831
 213-222

NOTES

.

I reached my home — what home? above
My home — my hope — my early love,
Lonely, like me, the desert rose,
Bow'd down with its own glory grows. 1831

231 *unpolluted* | *undefiled* 1831

243 Insert after: —

If my peace hath flown away
In a night — or in a day —
In a vision — or in none —
Is it, therefore, the less gone?
I was standing 'mid the roar
Of a wind-beaten shore,
And I held within my hand
Some particles of sand —
How bright! and yet to creep
Thro' my fingers to the deep!
My early hopes? no — they
Went gloriously away,
Like lightning from the sky —
Why in the battle did not I? 1831

NOTES BY POE

Note 1, page 198.

I have sent for thee, holy friar.

OF the history of Tamerlane little is known; and with that little I have taken the full liberty of a poet. — That he was descended from the family of Zinghis Khan is more than probable — but he is vulgarly supposed to have been the son of a shepherd, and to have raised himself to the throne by his own address. He

NOTES

died in the year 1405, in the time of Pope Innocent VII.

How I shall account for giving him “a friar” as a death-bed confessor — I cannot exactly determine. He wanted some one to listen to his tale — and why not a friar? It does not pass the bounds of possibility — quite sufficient for my purpose — and I have at least good authority on my side for such innovations.

NOTE 2, page 200.

The mists of the Taglay have shed, &c.

The mountains of Belur Taglay are a branch of the Imaus, in the southern part of Independent Tartary. They are celebrated for the singular wildness and beauty of their valleys.

NOTE 3, page 203.

*No purer thought
Dwell in a seraph's breast than thine.*

I must beg the reader's pardon for making Tamerlane, a Tartar of the fourteenth century, speak in the same language as a Boston gentleman of the nineteenth; but of the Tartar mythology we have little information.

NOTE 4, page 204.

Which blazes upon Edis' shrine.

A deity presiding over virtuous love, upon whose imaginary altar a sacred fire was continually blazing.

NOTE 5, page 208.

*— who hardly will conceive
That any should become “great,” born
In their own sphere —*

NOTES

Although Tamerlane speaks this, it is not the less true. It is a matter of the greatest difficulty to make the generality of mankind believe that one with whom they are upon terms of intimacy shall be called, in the world, a "great man." The reason is evident. There are few great men. Their actions are consequently viewed by the mass of the people through the medium of distance. The prominent parts of their characters are alone noted; and those properties, which are minute and common to every one, not being observed, seem to have no connection with a great character.

Who ever read the private memorials, correspondence, &c., which have become so common in our time, without wondering that "great men" should act and think "so abominably"?

NOTE 6, page 208.

Her own Alexis, who should plight, &c.

That Tamerlane acquired his renown under a feigned name is not entirely a fiction.

NOTE 7, page 210.

Look round thee now on Samarcand,

I believe it was after the battle of Angora that Tamerlane made Samarcand his residence. It became for a time the seat of learning and the arts.

NOTE 8, page 210.

And who her sovereign? Timur, &c.

He was called Timur Bek as well as Tamerlane.

NOTE 9, page 210.

The Zinghis' yet re-echoing fame.

NOTES

The conquests of Tamerlane far exceeded those of Zinghis Khan. He boasted to have two thirds of the world at his command.

NOTE 10, page 212.

*The sound of the coming darkness (known
To those whose spirits hearken)*

I have often fancied that I could distinctly hear the sound of the darkness, as it steals over the horizon — a foolish fancy, perhaps, but not more unintelligible than to see music —

“The mind the music breathing from her face.”

NOTE 11, page 212.

Let life then, as the day-flower, fall.

There is a flower (I have never known its botanic name), vulgarly called the day-flower. It blooms beautifully in the daylight, but withers towards evening, and by night its leaves appear totally shrivelled and dead. I have forgotten, however, to mention in the text, that it lives again in the morning. If it will not flourish in Tartary, I must be forgiven for carrying it thither.

NOTES. The history of the poem is given in the *Memoir*. In the edition of 1845 it was accompanied with the following “Advertisement: This poem was printed for publication in Boston, in the year 1827, but suppressed through circumstances of a private nature.” The “Early Poems” in the same edition were excused by the following note: “Private reasons — some of which have reference to the sin of plagiarism, and others to the date of Tennyson’s first poems — have induced me after some hesitation to republish those, the crude compositions of my earliest boyhood. They

NOTES

are printed *verbatim* — without alteration from the original edition — the date of which is too remote to be judiciously acknowledged."

TO SCIENCE

To Science. 1829; Atkinson's Philadelphia Casket, 1830; 1831; Southern Literary Messenger, May, 1836; Graham's Magazine, June, 1841; Philadelphia Saturday Museum, March 4, 1843; Broadway Journal, ii. 4; 1845.

TEXT. Philadelphia "Saturday Museum."

- 1 *true* | *meet* 1829; P. C.; 1831; S. L. M.
- 2 *peering* | *piercing* P. C.
- 3 *the* | *thy* P. C.
- 5 *should* | *shall* P. C.
- 8 *soared* | *soar* S. L. M.
- 11 *a* | *for* P. C.
- 12 *The gentle Naiad from her fountain flood*
1829; S. L. M. *her* | *the* P. C.
- 13 *grass* | *wood* P. C.
- 14 *summer* | *summer's* P. C. *tamarind tree* | *shrub-*
bery P. C.; S. L. M.
- 11-14 Hast thou not spoilt a story in each star?
Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood?
The elfin from the grass? — the dainty fog,
The witch, the sprite, the goblin — where
are they? G. M.

AL AARAAF

Al Aaraaf. 1829, 1831, 1845; lines I. 66-67, 70-79, 82-101; 126-129; II. 20-21, 24-27, 52-59, 68-135; Philadelphia "Saturday Museum," March 4, 1843.

NOTES

TEXT. 1845. Other readings:—

1-15 Mysterious star!
 Thou wert my dream
 All a long summer night —
 Be now my theme!
 By this clear stream,
 Of thee will I write;
 Meantime from afar
 Bathe me in light!

Thy world has not the dross of ours,
Yet all the beauty — all the flowers
That list our love, or deck our bowers
In dreamy gardens, where do lie
Dreamy maidens all the day,
While the silver winds of Circassy
On violet couches faint away.

Little — oh! little dwells in thee
Like unto what on Earth we see:
Beauty's eye is here the bluest
In the falsest and untruest —
On the sweetest air doth float
The most sad and solemn note —
If with thee be broken hearts,
Joy so peacefully departs,
That its echo still doth dwell,
Like the murmur in the shell.

Thou! thy truest type of grief
Is the gently falling leaf —
Thou! thy framing is so holy
Sorrow is not melancholy.

1831.

NOTES

- 11 *Oh* | *With* 1829
- 19 *An oasis* | *a garden-spot* 1829, 1831
- 43 *rear* 1831
- 95 *red* omit 1831
- 128 *All* | *Here* 1829, 1831
- Part II. 33 *peeréd* | *ventured* 1829
- 99 *lead* | *hang* 1829, 1831
- 197 *the orb of Earth* | *one constant star*
1829, 1831
- 213 *he* | *it* 1829, 1831

The variations of the "Saturday Museum" show a later revision than the text represents; but it has not been thought desirable to embody them in the text, as Poe himself did not do so on his last publication of it. They are as follows:—

- I. 88 *Which* | *That*
- 127 *merest* | *veriest*
- 128 *All* | *Here*
- 11. 53 *cheeks were* | *cheek was*
- 56 *that* | *this*
- 58 *fairy* | *brilliant*
- 91 *wings*
- 92 *Each . . . thing* | *All . . . things*
- 94 *would* | *will*
- 117 *a deep dreamy*

Some lines also are transposed from one place to another in the passages from II. 20–59.

NOTES BY POE

p. 108. *Al Aaraaf*. — A star was discovered by Tycho Brahe, which appeared suddenly in the heavens;

NOTES

attained, in a few days, a brilliancy surpassing that of Jupiter; then as suddenly disappeared, and has never been seen since.

p. 109. *Capo Deucato*. — On Santa Maria — *olim* Deucadia OF HER WHO LOVED. Sappho.

Flower of Trebizond. — This flower is much noticed by Lewenhoeck and Tournefort. The bee feeding upon its blossom becomes intoxicated.

p. 110. *Clytia*. — *Clytia*, — the *Chrysanthemum Peruvianum*, or, to employ a better-known term, the turnsol, — which turns continually toward the sun, covers itself, like Peru, the country from which it comes, with dewy clouds which cool and refresh its flowers during the most violent heat of the day. — B. DE ST. PIERRE.

And that aspiring flower. — There is cultivated, in the king's garden at Paris, a species of serpentine aloes without prickles, whose large and beautiful flower exhales a strong odor of the vanilla, during the time of its expansion, which is very short. It does not blow till toward the month of July — you then perceive it gradually open its petals — expand them — fade and die. — ST. PIERRE.

Valisnerian lotus. — There is found, in the Rhone, a beautiful lily of the Valisnerian kind. Its stem will stretch to the length of three or four feet, thus preserving its head above water in the swellings of the river.

And thy most lovely purple perfume. — The Hyacinth.

Indian Cupid. — It is a fiction of the Indians, that Cupid was first seen floating in one of these down the river Ganges, and that he still loves the cradle of his childhood.

NOTES

Odors. — And golden vials full of odors which are the prayers of the saints. — *Rev. St. John.*

p. 111. *A model.* — The Humanitarians held that God was to be understood as having really a human form. — *Vide CLARKE'S Sermons*, vol. i. page 26, fol. edit.

The drift of Milton's argument leads him to employ language which would appear, at first sight, to verge upon their doctrine; but it will be seen immediately that he guards himself against the charge of having adopted one of the most ignorant errors of the dark ages of the Church. — *DR. SUMNER'S Notes on Milton's Christian Doctrine.*

This opinion, in spite of many testimonies to the contrary, could never have been very general. Andeus, a Syrian of Mesopotamia, was condemned for the opinion as heretical. He lived in the beginning of the fourth century. His disciples were called Anthropomorphites. — *Vide DU PIN.*

Among Milton's minor poems are these lines:

Dicite sacrorum præsides nemorum Deæ, &c.
Quis ille primus cujus ex imagine
Natura solers finxit humanum genus?
Eternus, incorruptus, æquævus polo,
Unusque et universus exemplar Dei.

And afterward:—

Non cui profundum Cæcitas lumen dedit
Dircæus augur vidit hunc alto sinu, &c.

Fantasy. Seltsamen Tochter Jovis
 Seinem Schosskinde
 Der Phantasie. — *GOETHE.*

NOTES

p. 112. *Sightless*. — Too small to be seen. — LEGGE.

Fireflies. — I have often noticed a peculiar movement of the fire-flies, — they will collect in a body and fly off, from a common centre, into innumerable radii.

p. 113. *Therasæan*. — Therasæa, or Therasea, the island mentioned by Seneca, which, in a moment, arose from the sea to the eyes of astonished mariners.

Of molten stars.

Some star which, from the ruin'd roof
Of shak'd Olympus, by mischance did fall. — MILTON.

p. 114. *Persepolis*. — Voltaire, in speaking of Persepolis, says: “Je connois bien l'admiration qu'inspirent ces ruines — mais un palais érigé au pied d'une chaîne des rochers sterils — peut il être un chef-d'œuvre des arts?”

Gomorrhah. — “Oh! the wave” — Ula Deguisi is the Turkish appellation; but, on its own shores, it is called Bahar Loth, or Almotanah. There were undoubtedly more than two cities engulfed in the “dead sea.” In the valley of Siddim were five, — Adrah, Zeboin, Zoar, Sodom, and Gomorrhah. Stephen of Byzantium mentions eight, and Strabo thirteen (engulfed), — but the last is out of all reason.

It is said [Tacitus, Strabo, Josephus, Daniel of St. Saba, Nau, Mundrell, Troilo, D'Arvieux], that after an excessive drought, the vestiges of columns, walls, etc., are seen above the surface. At *any* season, such remains may be discovered by looking down into the transparent lake, and at such distances as would argue the existence of many settlements in the space now usurped by the “Asphaltites.”

Eyraco. — Chaldea.

And sees the darkness. — I have often thought I

NOTES

could distinctly hear the sound of the darkness as it stole over the horizon.

Young flowers. — Fairies use flowers for their charactery. — *Merry Wives of Windsor.*

p. 115. *The moonbeam.* — In Scripture is this passage — “The sun shall not harm thee by day, nor the moon by night.” It is perhaps not generally known that the moon, in Egypt, has the effect of producing blindness to those who sleep with the face exposed to its rays, to which circumstance the passage evidently alludes.

p. 116. *Albatross.* — The Albatross is said to sleep on the wing.

The murmur that springs. — I met with this idea in an old English tale, which I am now unable to obtain, and quote from memory, — “The verie essence and, as it were, springe-heade and origine of all musiche is the verie pleasaunte sounde which the trees of the forest do make when they growe.”

p. 117. *Have slept with the bee.* — The wild bee will not sleep in the shade if there be moonlight.

The rhyme in this verse, as in one about sixty lines before, has an appearance of affectation. It is, however, imitated from Sir W. Scott, or rather from Claud Halcro — in whose mouth I admired its effect: —

Oh! were there an island,
Tho’ ever so wild
Where woman might smile, and
No man be beguil’d, etc.

p. 118. *Apart from Heaven’s Eternity.* — With the Arabians there is a medium between Heaven and Hell, where men suffer no punishment, but yet do not attain that tranquil and even happiness which they suppose to be characteristic of heavenly enjoyment.

NOTES

Un no rompido sueno —

Un dia puro — allegre — libre

Quiera —

Libre de amor — de zelo —

De odio — de esperanza — de rezelo.

LUIS PONCE DE LEON.

Sorrow is not excluded from “Al Aaraaf,” but it is that sorrow which the living love to cherish for the dead, and which, in some minds, resembles the delirium of opium. The passionate excitement of Love and the buoyancy of spirit attendant upon intoxication are its less holy pleasures, — the price of which, to those souls who make choice of “Al Aaraaf” as their residence after life, is final death and annihilation.

Tears, of perfect moan.

There be tears of perfect moan

Wept for thee in Helicon. — MILTON.

p. 119. *Parthenon*. — It was entire in 1687 — the most elevated spot in Athens.

Than even thy glowing bosom.

Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows

Than have the white breasts of the Queen of
Love. — MARLOWE.

Pennoned. — Pennon — for pinion. — MILTON.

NOTES. The notes by Poe are partly from Moore’s “Lalla Rookh,” Chateaubriand’s “Itinéraire,” and other authorities easily traced. In the edition of 1829 the notes are worded, in a few instances, differently.

NOTES

"THE HAPPIEST DAY—THE HAPPIEST HOUR"

"*The Happiest Day—The Happiest Hour.*" 1827.

TEXT. 1827.

STANZAS

"*In Youth Have I Known One With Whom the Earth.*" 1827.

TEXT. 1827.

EVENING STAR

Evening Star. 1827.

TEXT. 1827.

DREAMS

Dreams. 1827.

TEXT. 1827. Other readings, from the Wilmer MS., in this instance contemporary, but not autographic.

5 *cold* | *dull* MS.

6 *must* | *shall* MS.

7 *still upon the lovely* | *ever on the chilly* MS.

14 *dreams of living* | *dreary fields of* MS.

15 *loveliness have left my very* | *left unheedingly my* MS.

THE LAKE. TO —

The Lake: To——. 1827, 1829, 1831 (in *Tamerlane*), 1845; Missionary Memorial, 1846 (published, 1845).

TEXT. 1845. Other readings:—

1 *spring of youth* | *youth's spring* M. M.

mystic | *ghastly* M. M.

NOTES

Murmuring in | *In a dirge-like* M. M.
the | *that* M. M.
poisonous | *poison'd* M. M.
gulf | *depth* M. M.

The first version is 1827, as follows, other early readings, including those of the Wilmer MS., being noted below:—

THE LAKE

IN youth's spring it was my lot
 To haunt of the wide earth a spot
 The which I could not love the less;
 So lovely was the loneliness
 Of a wild lake, with black rock bound,
 And the tall pines that tower'd around.
 But when the night had thrown her pall
 Upon that spot — as upon all,
 And the wind would pass me by
 In its stilly melody,
 My infant spirit would awake
 To the terror of the lone lake.
 Yet that terror was not fright —
 But a tremulous delight,
 And a feeling undefined,
 Springing from a darken'd mind.

9 *wind would pass me by* | *black wind murmured by*
 1829

10 *In its stilly* | *in a stilly* MS.; *in a dirge of* 1829

11 *infant* | *boyish* MS.

15-16 A feeling not the jewell'd mine

Should ever bribe me to define —

Nor Love — although the Love be thine 1829

NOTES

Death was in that poison'd wave
And in its gulf a fitting grave
For him who thence could solace bring
To his dark imagining;
Whose wildering thought could even make
An Eden of that dim lake.

Compare also "Tamerlane," 1831, *infra*, pp. 212-213.

SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

Spirits of the Dead, 1829; "Burton's Gentleman's Magazine," July, 1839; | *Visit of the Dead*, 1827.

TEXT. "Burton's Gentleman's Magazine," except as noted. Other readings, including those of the Wilmer MS., in this instance a contemporary, but not autographic copy:—

10 *Shall over* | *shall then o'er* MS.

18 Insert after:—

But 't will leave thee as each star
With the dewdrop flies afar. MS.

19 *shalt* | *canst* MS.

21-22 transpose MS.

22 *dewdrops* | *dewdrop* MS.; 1829; B. G. M.
The first version is 1827, as follows:—

VISIT OF THE DEAD

.

THY soul shall find itself alone—
Alone of all on earth—unknown
The cause— but none are near to pry

20 *dark* | *lone* MS. 1829

21 *Whose solitary soul could make* MS. 1829

NOTES

Into thine hour of secrecy.
Be silent in that solitude,
Which is not loneliness — for then
The spirits of the dead, who stood
In life before thee, are again
In death around thee, and their will
Shall then o’ershadow thee — be still:
For the night, tho’ clear, shall frown;
And the stars shall look not down
From their thrones, in the dark heaven,
With light like Hope to mortals given,
But their red orbs, without beam,
To thy withering heart shall seem
As a burning, and a fever
Which would cling to thee forever.
But ’t will leave thee, as each star
In the morning light afar
Will fly thee — and vanish:
— But its *thought* thou canst not banish.
The breath of God will be still;
And the mist upon the hill
By that summer breeze unbroken
Shall charm thee — as a token,
And a symbol which shall be
Secrecy in thee.

A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM

A Dream within a Dream. Flag of our Union, March
31, 1849. | *Imitation*, 1827; *To* —, 1829;
Tamerlane, 1831.

TEXT. Flag of our Union. Other readings: —

The first version of these lines is 1827, as follows:

NOTES

IMITATION

A DARK unfathom'd tide
Of interminable pride —
A mystery, and a dream,
Should my early life seem;
I say that dream was fraught
With a wild, and waking thought
Of beings that have been,
Which my spirit hath not seen,
Had I let them pass me by,
With a dreaming eye!
Let none of earth inherit
That vision on my spirit;
Those thoughts I would control,
As a spell upon his soul:
For that bright hope at last
And that light time have past,
And my world arrest hath gone
With a sigh as it pass'd on:
I care not tho' it perish
With a thought I then did cherish.

This poem was revised in 1829, as follows, the variations of the Wilmer MS. being noted below: —

TO —

1

SHOULD my early life seem
[As well it might] a dream —
Yet I build no faith upon
The King Napoleon —
I look not up afar
To my destiny in a star:

I. 6 To | For MS.

NOTES

2

In parting from you now
Thus much I will avow —
There are beings, and have been
Whom my spirit had not seen
Had I let them pass me by
With a dreaming eye —
If my peace hath fled away
In a night — or in a day —
In a vision — or in none —
Is it therefore the less gone?

3

I am standing 'mid the roar
Of a weather-beaten shore,
And I hold within my hand
Some particles of sand —
How few! and how they creep
Thro' my fingers to the deep!
My early hopes? no — they
Went gloriously away,
Like lightning from the sky
At once — and so will I.

So young! ah! no — not now —
Thou hast not seen my brow,
But they tell thee I am proud —
They lie — they lie aloud —
My bosom beats with shame
At the paltriness of name
With which they dare combine
A feeling such as mine —

NOTES

Nor Stoic? I am not:
In the terror of my lot
I laugh to think how poor
That pleasure "to endure!"
What! shade of Zeus! — I!
Endure! — no — no — defy.

The lines 13-27, reappear revised in "Tamerlane," 1831, *infra*, p. 215.

SONG

Song (I saw thee on thy bridal day). 1827, 1829, 1845; "Broadway Journal," ii. 11.

TEXT. 1845. Other readings, including those of the Wilmer MS.: —

I. 1 *thy* | *the* 1827

II. 2 *Of young passion free* 1827

3 *aching* | *chained* 1827; *fetter'd* 1829

4 *could* | *might* 1827

1-4 omit, MS.

III. 1 *perhaps* | *I ween* 1827

TO THE RIVER —

To the River —. 1829; "Burton's Gentleman's Magazine," August, 1839; Philadelphia "Saturday Museum," March 4, 1843; 1845; "Broadway Journal," ii. 9.

TEXT. Philadelphia "Saturday Museum." Other readings, including those of the Wilmer MS.: —

I. 2 *crystal wandering* | *labyrinth-like* MS.
1829; B. G. M.

NOTES

- II. 4 *Her worshipper* | *Thy pretty self* MS.
 5 *His* | *my* MS. 1829; B. G. M.; B. J.
 7 *His* | *The* MS. 1829; B. G. M.; B. J.;
 deeply | *lightly* MS.
 8 *of her soul-searching* | *The scrutiny of*
 her MS. 1829; B. G. M.

TO —

To — (The bowers whereat in dreams I saw). 1829,
 1845; "Broadway Journal," ii. 11.

TEXT. 1845. Other readings:—

- III. 3. *The* | omit 1829.
 4 *baubles* | *trifles* 1829.

A DREAM

A Dream. 1829, 1845; "Broadway Journal," ii. 6 | no
 title, 1827.

TEXT, 1845. Other readings:—

I. Insert before:

A wildr'd being from my birth,
 My spirit spurn'd control,
 But now, abroad on the wide earth, 1827.
 Where wanderest thou, my soul?

II. 1 *Ah* | *And* 1827, 1829

IV. 1 *Storm and* | *misty* 1827

2 *Trembled from* | *dimly shone* 1827

ROMANCE

Romance. Philadelphia "Saturday Museum," March
 4, 1843; 1845; "Broadway Journal," ii. 8 | *Pref-*
ance, 1829; *Introduction*, 1831.

NOTES

TEXT. 1845. Other readings:—

12 *Heavens* B. J.

14 *I scarcely have had time for cares* S. M.

The version of 1831 is as follows, earlier readings of 1829 being noted below:—

INTRODUCTION

ROMANCE, who loves to nod and sing,
With drowsy head and folded wing,
Among the green leaves as they shake
Far down within some shadowy lake,
To me a painted paroquet
Hath been — a most familiar bird —
Taught me my alphabet to say, —
To lisp my very earliest word
While in the wild-wood I did lie
A child — with a most knowing eye.

Succeeding years, too wild for song,
Then roll'd like tropic storms along,
Where, tho' the garish lights that fly,
Dying along the troubled sky
Lay bare, thro' vistas thunder-riven,
The blackness of the general Heaven,
That very blackness yet doth fling
Light on the lightning's silver wing.

For, being an idle boy lang syne,
Who read Anacreon, and drank wine,
I early found Anacreon rhymes
Were almost passionate sometimes —
And by strange alchemy of brain

NOTES

His pleasures always turn'd to pain —
 His naivete to wild desire —
 His wit to love — his wine to fire —
 And so, being young and dipt in folly
 I fell in love with melancholy,
 And used to throw my earthly rest
 And quiet all away in jest —
 I could not love except where Death
 Was mingling his with Beauty's breath —
 Or Hymen, Time, and Destiny
 Were stalking between her and me.

O, then the eternal Condor years,
 So shook the very Heavens on high,
 With tumult as they thunder'd by;
 I had no time for idle cares,
 Thro' gazing on the unquiet sky!
 Or if an hour with calmer wing
 Its down did on my spirit fling,
 That little hour with lyre and rhyme
 To while away — forbidden thing!
 My heart half fear'd to be a crime
 Unless it trembled with the string.

-
- 35 *O, then the* | *Of late* 1829.
 36 *shook the very Heavens* | *shake the very air* 1829
 37 *thunder'd* | *thunder* 1829.
 38 *I hardly have had time for cares* 1829.
 40 *Or if . . . wing* | *And when . . . wings* 1829.
 41 *did on ! . . fling* | *upon . . . flings* 1829.
 43 *thing* | *things* 1829.
 44 *half-feared* | *would feel* 1829.
 45 *Unless it trembled . . . string* | *Did it not tremble*
 . . . strings 1829.

NOTES

But now my soul hath too much room —
Gone are the glory and the gloom —
The black hath mellow'd into grey,
And all the fires are fading away.

My draught of passion hath been deep —
I revell'd, and I now would sleep —
And after-drunkenness of soul
Succeeds the glories of the bowl —
And idle longing night and day
To dream my very life away.

But dreams — of those who dream as I,
Aspiringly, are damned, and die:
Yet should I swear I mean alone,
By notes so very shrilly blown,
To break upon Time's monotone,
While yet my vapid joy and grief
Are tintless of the yellow leaf —
Why not an imp the graybeard hath
Will shake his shadow in my path —
And even the graybeard will o'erlook
Connivingly my dreaming book.

FAIRY-LAND

Fairy-land. 1829, 1831, 1845; "Burton's Gentleman's Magazine," August, 1839; "Broadway Journal," ii. 13.

TEXT. 1845. Other readings:—

The version of 1831 is as follows, other early readings being noted below:—

46-66 omit 1829.

NOTES

FAIRY-LAND

Sit down beside me, Isabel,
Here, dearest, where the moonbeam fell
Just now so fairy-like and well.
Now thou art dress'd for paradise!
I am star-stricken with thine eyes!
My soul is lolling on thy sighs!
Thy hair is lifted by the moon
Like flowers by the low breath of June!
Sit down, sit down — how came we here?
Or is it all but a dream, my dear?

You know that most enormous flower —
That rose — that what d 'ye ye call it — that hung
Up like a dog-star in this bower —
To-day (the wind blew, and) it swung
So impudently in my face,
So like a thing alive you know,
I tore it from its pride of place
And shook it into pieces — so
Be all ingratitude requited.
The winds ran off with it delighted,
And, thro' the opening left, as soon
As she threw off her cloak, yon moon
Has sent a ray down with a tune.

And this ray is a *fairy* ray —
Did you not say so, Isabel?
How fantastically it fell
With a spiral twist and a swell,
And over the wet grass rippled away
With a tinkling like a bell!

NOTES

In my own country all the way
We can discover a moon ray
Which thro' some tatter'd curtain pries
Into the darkness of a room,
Is by (the very source of gloom)
The motes, and dust, and flies,
On which it trembles and lies
Like joy upon sorrow!
O, *when* will come the morrow?
Isabel, do you not fear
The night and the wonders here?

Dim vales! and shadowy floods!
And cloudy-looking woods
Whose forms we can't discover
For the tears that drip all over!

Huge moons — see! wax and wane —
Again — again — again.
Every moment of the night —
Forever changing places!
How they put out the starlight
With the breath from their pale faces!

Lo! one is coming down
With its centre on the crown

45 *see* | *there* 1829; B. G. M.

49 *How* | *And* 1829; B. G. M.

51 About twelve by the moon-dial

One, more *filmy* than the rest

[A sort which, upon trial,

They have found to be the best]

Comes down — still down — and down 1829; B.
G. M.

NOTES

Of a mountain's eminence!
Down — still down — and down —
Now deep shall be — O deep!
The passion of our sleep!
For that wide circumference
In easy drapery falls
Drowsily over halls —
Over ruin'd walls —
(Over waterfalls!)
O'er the strange woods — o'er the sea —
Alas! over the sea!

ALONE

Alone. "Scribner's Magazine," September, 1875.

TEXT. "Scribner's Magazine."

NOTES. This poem, on its publication, was dated, not in Poe's hand, "Baltimore, March 17, 1829."
The words appear to be unauthorized.

G. E. W.

54-63 While its wide circumference
In easy drapery falls
Over hamlets, and rich halls
Wherever they may be —
O'er the strange woods — o'er the sea —
Over spirits on the wing
Over every drowsy thing —
And buries them up quite
In a labyrinth of light —

And then, how deep! O! deep!
Is the passion of their sleep!
In the morning they arise,
And their moony covering

NOTES

Is soaring in the skies,
With the tempests as they toss,
¹ Like — almost anything —
Or a yellow Albatross.

They use that moon no more
For the same end as before —
Videlicet a tent —
Which I think extravagant:
Its atomies, however,
Into a shower dissever,
Of which those butterflies,
Of Earth, who seek the skies,
And so come down again
[The unbelieving things!]
Have brought a specimen
Upon their quivering wings.

1829; B. G. M.

¹ Plagiarism — see the works of Thomas Moore —
passim — [Poe's note].



